

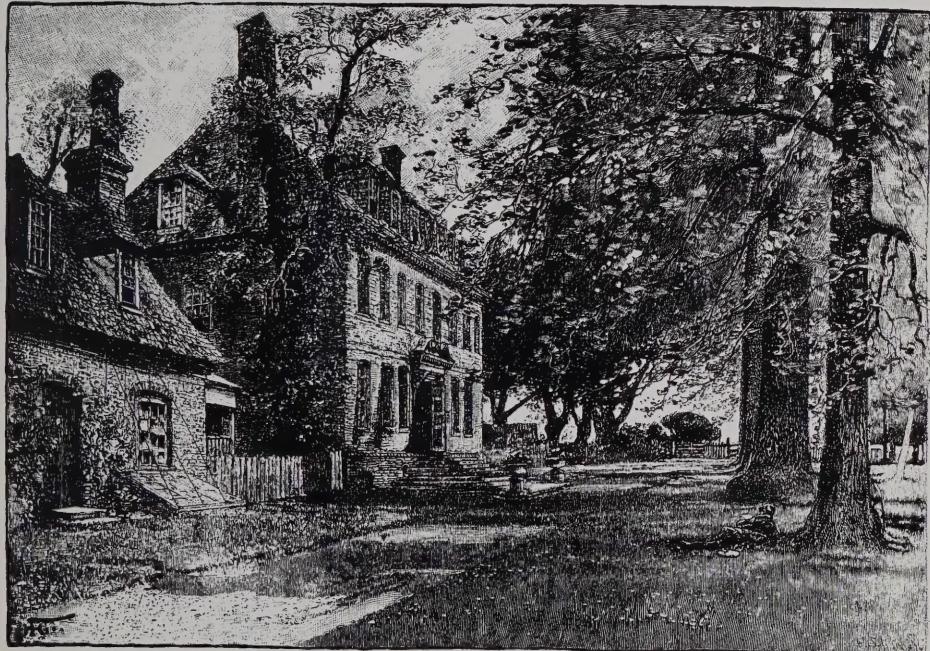
THE ASYLUM

Quarterly Journal of the
Numismatic Bibliomania Society

www.coinbooks.org

Volume 25, No. 1

Winter 2007



“*Man walks the earth
The quintessence of dust:
Books, from the ashes of his mirth
Madness and sorrow, seem
To draw the elixir of some rarer dust;
Or, like the Stone of Alchemy, transmute
Life’s cheating dross to golden truth of
dream.*”



JOHN TODHUNTER
1839-1916

The Asylum

Vol. 25, No. 1

Consecutive Issue No. 95

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Front cover: Westover, the home of William Byrd II in Charles City County, Virginia. From Constance Cary Harrison, "Colonel William Byrd of Westover, Virginia," *The Century Magazine* 42 no. 2 (1891): 163-178.

Editor's Introduction

After several years in the capable hands of E. Tomlinson Fort, the editorship of *The Asylum* has been transferred to me. Although I cannot hope to bring to the job the same knowledge of numismatic literature that previous editors have had, I trust that my professional experience in publishing (both numismatic and other) will help *The Asylum* to continue its development as a significant journal in its field.

My part of this task is the easy one, though: the previous editors have already established a strong journal, and I have only to continue along this path. It will be apparent that I have introduced a few design changes, in the hope of better harmony between the visual elements of the journal as well as with its spirit and intent, but such features are superficial; any journal is ultimately entirely dependent on the contributors who create its substance.

The present issue offers an excellent sampling of the kinds of articles that distinguish *The Asylum*. As they show, the history of numismatic book collecting, bibliographic study of numismatic books, the histories of particular collections of coins and medals, and the history of numismatic scholarship are all full of potential for research. Many other topics have appeared in recent issues, such as biographical essays on important numismatists, historical studies on the documentation for particular coins, and syntheses that highlight particular genres or pieces of numismatic ephemera. It is my hope as editor that you, the members of the Numismatic Bibliomania Society and readers of this journal, will find inspiration to explore these and other topics in numismatic history and literature in print, so as to make your own presence felt in the continuing development of this particular portion of the numismatic literature, *The Asylum*.

David Yoon



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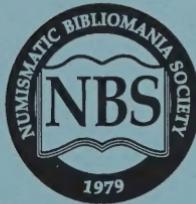
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William Byrd II and the First Numismatic Library in North America

Joel J. Orosz

In the United States of the early twenty-first century, numismatic libraries, if one counts private and public, individual and institutional, number in the thousands. There was a time, however, when there was but a single such collection of numismatic works in North America, and fittingly enough, it was located in the Old Dominion, old England's very first "plantation" in the new world: today's state of Virginia. The spiritual ancestor of everyone reading *The Asylum* gathered a library that is celebrated among the bibliophilic community, but lost to the memory of those who collect numismatic literature. This oversight must be corrected, and due honor paid to the Adam of all numismatic bibliophiles in the United States.

William Byrd II was born in 1674, a mere 67 years after the British had first established a toehold at Jamestown, and died in 1744, nearly 40 years before the British lost their most of North American colonies after the battle of Yorktown. In this now-vanished provincial world, nearly every high-value manufactured item came from Europe, and literature was no exception. Since hard currency was always scarce in the colonies, and shipping bulky and heavy bound volumes across the Atlantic was very expensive, books were a luxury item of the first order. Colonial libraries, therefore, whether public or private, tended to be, by modern standards, very modest affairs. A few hundred titles on one's shelves was a mark of distinction. A census of more than a thousand volumes could be gathered only by the provincial plutocracy. By this measure, William Byrd II was bibliographical potentate among plutocrats.

The Byrd library was actually a multi-generational affair; it was begun by the great bibliophile's father, William Byrd I (1652-1704), and completed by his son, William Byrd III (1728-1777). We know a great deal

about the titles that graced the shelves at Westover, for at some point between 1751 and 1754, William III commissioned a bookbinder named John Stretch to catalogue the contents of the Byrds' bookshelves. The fruit of Stretch's labor survives in the collection of the Library Company of Philadelphia. After William III died, his widow sold the library *en bloc* to Isaac Zane, the proprietor of the Marlborough Iron Works, for the princely sum of 2000 pounds. Zane kept Byrd's books for only three years before consigning them to a Philadelphia bookseller to be sold at fixed prices. The books were recataloged for sale, and the resulting four-volume "Catalogue of Isaac Zane's Books" resides today in the collection of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania. From these sources (but principally relying on the Stretch catalogue), Kevin J. Hayes authored an annotated catalogue, *The Library of William Byrd of Westover*, published in 1997 by the Library Company of Philadelphia. Hayes described 2543 volumes in the main catalogue, plus 47 in the first addendum, 6 in the second, and 8 in the third, for a grand total of 2604 titles.

Hayes also reconstructed, in his introductory material, the twenty-year process, conducted by assorted booksellers and relatives, which eventually scattered the great Byrd collection across the northeastern portion of the new United States. It was a drama, or perhaps more accurately, a melodrama, in which early numismatists played prominent parts. In October and November of 1781, for instance, Pierre Eugene du Simitière, whose numismatic exploits the author of this article chronicled in *The Eagle That is Forgotten*, purchased eight titles with the Byrd provenance. Long after Byrd's library was dispersed, the redoubtable nineteenth century bibliophile, Edward D. Ingraham, took a special interest in titles that had resided at Westover, some of which appeared in the 1855 auction sale of his library. An addendum to this auction that featured coins made the Ingraham sale one of the earliest entries in Attinelli's *Numisgraphics*.

Ingraham's fascination with the Byrd provenance more than a century after the sage of Westover's death underscores what a remarkable achievement it was, decades before the American Revolution, to create such an extensive library in provincial Virginia. A small, but not insignificant, portion of that library lays claim to being the first on numismatic topics in North America. More specifically, as William Byrd II's commonplace book reveals, the titles focused on the topics of medals

and emblems. Before taking a closer look at these volumes, however, it will be necessary to discuss that (ironically) least commonplace of all literary forms, the commonplace book.

The commonplace book was an eighteenth-century genre that has not survived the transition to the modern world. It was more than a diary, although it contained deeply personal reflections; it was a repository of extracts from printed works, although it was far more than a mere scrapbook; its primary function was personal ruminations, although it contained an element of rehearsal for public actions. In short, a commonplace book was an intensely idiosyncratic record of that which its author found to be of value and significance, and a self-conscious guidebook for self-improvement.

It is significant, therefore, that William Byrd II, who took his commonplace writing very seriously, extracted into his commonplace book a long passage from Joseph Addison's "Dialogue III: A Parallel Between the Ancient and Modern Medals" in his *Dialogues upon the Usefulness of Ancient Medals*. The editors of Byrd's commonplace book¹ reprinted that extract and noted that Byrd's library contained four books on the subject of medals:

- Giovanni Pietro Bellori, *Veterum illustrium philosophorum, poetarum, rhetorum, et oratorum imagines, ex vetustis nummis...* (Rome, 1685?), Hayes no. 99
- Pierre Bizot, *Medalische historie der Republyk van Holland* (Amsterdam, 1690), Hayes no. 1991 (this was one of the books purchased by Pierre Eugene du Simitière)
- Louis Joubert, *La Science des médailles* (Paris, 1692), Hayes no. 1320
- Claude Francois Menestrier, *Histoire du règne de Louis le Grand par les médailles* (Paris, 1700), Hayes no. 2035

The library at Westover was even richer in books on emblems, which are closely related to the symbolic aspects of numismatics. Berland, Gilliam, and Lockridge counted no fewer than eleven books on this topic in Byrd's collection, with the earliest dating to 1548. Together with the titles on medals, they comprised the first (and for perhaps the bal-

¹ Kevin Berland, Jan Kirsten Gilliam, and Kenneth A. Lockridge, eds., *The Commonplace Book of William Byrd II of Westover* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001).

ance of the eighteenth century, the best) numismatic library in North America.

A numismatic library of fifteen volumes would be considered a paltry bookshelf in 2007, but 263 years ago in Virginia it constituted a pioneering achievement. It seems altogether fitting that the title of the most famous work that Byrd authored—*History of the Dividing Line Betwixt Virginia and North Carolina*—serves as a symbol for his place in the history of numismatic literature. No one in North America had created such a library before William Byrd II, but thousands were destined to follow in his footsteps. Byrd is himself the dividing line, the historical break between “never before” on the one hand, and “always afterwards” on the other. For that achievement alone, he deserves a prominent place in the collective memory of every numismatic bibliophile.

Joe Boling
for ANA Governor

Over the past many years, I have thought that I could do the things I wanted to do within the ANA from my position as chief judge, and I have accomplished many of those objectives.

Now there are changes that I believe are necessary that I cannot achieve as chief judge. If you are of a similar mind, please assist me in becoming nominated for governor, and then vote for me in July.

Advertisement paid for by Committee to Elect Joseph Boling ANA Governor,
Thomas VV. Sheehan, chair, PO Box 1477, Edmonds, WA 98020-1477,
jeboling@aol.com



Joseph Florimond Loubat: A Bibliographical Addendum

George Kolbe

Pete Smith's article in Volume XXIV/1 (2006) of *The Asylum* adds much to our knowledge of one of the more fascinating characters of the gilded age in America. The physical characteristics of Loubat's numismatic magnum opus, *The Medallic History of the United States of America*, are likewise more complex than is widely known. There are at least four different issues and three known deluxe editions, along with the 1967 reprint in greatly reduced format.

"Hoard" sets of the 1878 first edition are most often encountered. These can often be identified by black finger smudges and light pattern fading and discoloration on the bindings. Another characteristic is the inclusion of an eight-page promotional supplement at the end of the text volume. Occasionally, sets without the supplement are seen. In 1880, a second edition was issued, and in 1881, a third edition.

The 1878 edition without the supplement is clearly the first issue of the first edition. Sets are sometimes encountered with early presentation inscriptions signed by Loubat.

The 1878 edition with the supplement is presumably the second issue of the first edition. Both 1878 editions were issued in the familiar light orange cloth, though the first issue is slightly smaller: 37.5 × 28.5–28 cm versus 38.5 × 29.5–28.5 cm.

The 1880 edition is quite scarce. It was also issued in orange cloth, a trifle richer in color, with slightly different gilt lettering and other minor binding variations. In size it matches the first printing. In addition to the date change on the titles, the listing of various affiliations following the author's name has grown from four to seven lines.

The 1881 edition features additional honorifics, as evidenced by the following transcription of its title: THE MEDALLIC HISTORY / OF / THE

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, / 1776-1876. / BY J. F. LOUBAT, LL. D. / MEMBER OF THE NEW-YORK HISTORICAL SOCIETY. / CORRESPONDING MEMBER OF THE MASSACHUSETTS HISTORICAL SOCIETY. / KNIGHT COMMANDER OF DANILO OF MONTENEGRO, / OF ST. STANISLAUS OF RUSSIA, AND OF WASA OF SWEDEN. / KNIGHT OFFICER OF THE LION OF ZAEHRINGEN OF BADEN, OF THE CROWN OF BAVARIA, OF THE / CROWN OF PRUSSIA, OF ALBERT OF SAXONY, / AND OF THE CROWN AND OF FREDERIC OF WÜRTTEMBERG. / KNIGHT OF THE DANEBROG OF DANEMARK [sic], OF THE CROWN OF ITALY, / AND OF THE LEGION OF HONOR OF FRANCE. / WITH 170 ETCHINGS BY JULES JACQUEMART. The 1880 and 1881 editions that have been encountered include the promotional supplement.

Only one example of the 1881 edition is known to the writer, and it is one of three presently known deluxe leather-bound sets. It is signed in gilt by MATTHEWS, a master American bookbinder of the era, and is bound in crimson full morocco decorated in gilt. Another deluxe leather-bound set known to the writer is an 1878 first issue inscribed by Loubat, similarly bound by Matthews in red morocco. A third example, the author's own, is described in Pete Smith's article.

Comparing the text of the different versions of Loubat would be an onerous task, and one not undertaken by the writer. The basic pagination is identical and it seems likely that only the titles were changed; at most, one might expect the correction of typographical or factual errors.

Judging from the opulence of the production and the author's meticulous updating of knightly honors, it is tempting to conclude that Loubat's work was written more to impress than to inform. While the former may be true, *Medallic History* is immeasurably more than a vanity publication. In his upcoming work on early American medals, John W. Adams observes: "Loubat's pioneering opus has never received the adulation that it deserves. His solid scholarship, delivered with pleasing aesthetics, has served as a foundation for all subsequent writings on the subject."

Other varieties of Loubat may await discovery. Though our bibliographical knowledge has advanced considerably in recent years, much remains to be discovered. American numismatic bibliography is still in its infancy. It is an exciting time.

The de Coppet Hoard of Early Silver Dollars

W. David Perkins

In the Fall 1998 issue of *The Asylum* Randolph Zander wrote the following:

Henry Grunthal's direct association, starting around 1950, with the ANS provided that he might continue, on a discreet basis, some activity as a sort of dealer's dealer - a sensible arrangement to both parties' advantage. One example was in 1955 his placing among dealers of the huge accumulation of choice gold and crowns belonging to a Mr. de Coppet, a prominent dealer in odd lots on Wall Street. Almost everyone except Wayne [sic] Raymond bought some of the coins, he showed no interest, reportedly dismissing the material as "sucker bait." Jim Kelly's scout reportedly bought from the de Coppet hoard an incredible 400 pre-1804 U. S. "daddy dollars."¹

I love a challenge and a good mystery, especially when it pertains to the early (1794-1803) silver dollars. I have been collecting and researching the early dollars since the mid-1980s, with an emphasis on the "famous collectors and collections." I had first heard about the de Coppet early silver dollars when Q. David Bowers' *Silver Dollars and Trade Dollars of the United States* listed what he called "The Andre DeCoppet Collection."² The de Coppet collection was offered for sale in James Kelly's *Auction Catalogue: United States, Foreign, Ancient Rare Coins; Central States Numismatic Convention Sale, April 29-30, 1955*. The introduction to the "Second Session" of this sale, page 22, refers to "U. S. silver dollars from the DeCoppet Collection" and expresses thanks to Mr. Frank Stirling for the attributions (see Figure 2).

Lots 649-774 were 123 early silver dollars noted as being from the de Coppet collection. Lots 1-23 in this sale catalogue were also early

1 Randolph Zander, "Some Random Numismatic Reminiscences—Part 3 of 3," *The Asylum* 16 no. 4 (1998): 9.

2 Q. David Bowers, *Silver Dollars and Trade Dollars of the United States: A Complete Encyclopedia* (Wolfeboro, N.H.: Bowers and Merena, 1993), p. 118.

Auction Catalogue

UNITED STATES, FOREIGN, ANCIENT

RARE COINS



Central States Numismatic Society
Convention Sale

APRIL 29 - 30, 1955

HOTEL STATLER

DETROIT, MICHIGAN

Catalogued and Sold by

James Kelly

Third and Broadway

Dayton 7, Ohio

Figure 1. The André de Coppet collection of early silver dollars was offered for sale in James Kelly's *Auction Catalogue: United States, Foreign, Ancient Rare Coins; Central States Numismatic Convention Sale, April 29-30, 1955*.

silver dollars. However, these were not listed as being part of the de Coppet collection. Thus, they may or may not have been part of it.

After the publication of Bowers' silver dollar book and after acquiring a copy of the sales catalogue, I went about asking various collectors and dealers if they had heard of André de Coppet and his collection of silver dollars. I was aware that Art Kagin had always liked the early dollars. I asked him if he had heard of de Coppet. Art said he recalled a "DeCoppet Hoard" of early silver dollars in the 1950s and suggested that I contact the American Numismatic Society (ANS) for more information. I contacted the ANS but was unsuccessful in learning anything about the de Coppet collection or hoard. Zander's article in 1998 was the next time I heard reference to this possible hoard of early dollars.

Was de Coppet's collection part of a hoard, or was it a die-variety collection with 123 early silver dollars in relatively higher grades? In first reviewing the early dollar lots in this sale catalogue it appears that it was a die-variety collection, with many specimens in relatively high grades for early dollars. All of the early dollars in this 1955 James Kelly sale catalogue were attributed by Bolender variety and sub-variety (today more properly referred to as die states). However, it was clear from the James Kelly sale catalogue that Frank Stirling, an early dollar specialist from Baton Rouge, Louisiana, had attributed the dollars in this sale to their Bolender varieties. If de Coppet was die-variety collector or specialist one might logically conclude that he would already have attributed the early silver dollars in his collection. Thus, if de Coppet had 400 unattributed silver dollars, it was more likely an accumulation or hoard than a die-variety collection.

Furthermore, the collection is missing almost all of the rarest die varieties (those that are R-6, R-7, or R-8 on the Sheldon scale).³ This to me is further evidence that this collection was an accumulation or hoard. On the other hand, it is possible that de Coppet focused on condition first. Many of the rarities aren't found in higher grades, so he may have passed on acquiring them. However, enough R-6 and higher varieties do come nice and de Coppet did not have any (as evidenced by these sale lots). Weighing all the evidence and considering that Art Kagin had referred to the "DeCoppet hoard" led me to believe that the collection was most likely an accumulation or hoard.

³ Lot 697, a 1798 B-31a dollar, was called R-7 in the catalogue. It is at best an R-5 today.

Second Session

FRIDAY 7:00 P. M.

APRIL 29, 1955

STATLER HOTEL

DETROIT, MICHIGAN

U. S. SILVER DOLLARS
From The DeCoppet Collection

(Classified according to the reference work by Mr. M. H. Bolender, "U. S. Early Silver Dollars." I wish to express my appreciation to Mr. Frank Stirling who made the attributions.)

649.	1794 Ext. Fine, particularly so for this consistently poorly struck date. Stars on left side are unusually well struck; however, coin shows marks of having been repaired at the 14th star on obverse and back of "F" in "Of" on reverse. While this definitely distracts from the value of this coin, it is only noticeable on close examination. It is still an excessively rare and highly desirable specimen	1000.00
650.	1795 B-1 Flowing hair, two leaves under each wing. This is the type often referred to as Head 1794. A gem coin, Pract. Unc.	100.00
651.	1795 Same variety, Fine-V. Fine	40.00
652.	1795 B-2 Flowing hair, two leaves. Fine but nose badly mashed ...	25.00
653.	1795 B-4 Flowing hair, two leaves. Fine, Rarity 4	35.00
654.	1795 B-5 Flowing hair, three leaves under each wing. A beautiful Uncirculated specimen with nearly full mint lustre. Rare condition	125.00
655.	1795 Same variety, V. Fine	40.00
656.	1795 B-7 Flowing hair, three leaves. V. Fine but shows slight adjustment marks. Rarity 4	50.00
657.	1795 B-9 Flowing hair, two leaves. Choice Ext. Fine, beautifully toned. Rarity 5	125.00
658.	1795 B-14 Bust type, well struck. Pract. Unc. with considerable mint lustre. Rarity 3	90.00
659.	1795 B-15 Bust type. Unc. and just as perfect as the day struck. Original mint lustre. Rarity 4	150.00
660.	1795 Same variety. V. Good-Fine	25.00
661.	1796 B-4 Small date, large letters on reverse. Pract. Unc. with considerable mint lustre, really a beautiful coin. Rarity 3	100.00
662.	1796 Same variety, V. Good-Fine	25.00
663.	1796 B-4a Excessively rare variety. Mr. Bolender knew of only one specimen in 1952. V. Fine plus. Rarity 7	125.00
664.	1796 B-5 Large date, small letters on reverse. Pract. Unc., a beautiful sharp specimen. Rarity 3	90.00
665.	1796 B-5a Same die as preceding but die lump is larger and extends to letter "c." Choice Ext. Fine with some mint lustre. Rarity 4 ...	85.00

Figure 2. The de Coppet silver dollars were graded, attributed, and catalogued by the early dollar specialist and collector Frank M. Stirling of Baton Rouge, Louisiana. Frank also photographed many of the silver dollars. Unfortunately, James Kelly chose not to include any plate photos in the sale catalogue.

I was well aware that Frank Stirling was a specialist collector of the early dollars. Frank had published a couple of articles in *The Numismatist* announcing the discovery of new die marriages for early silver dollars. Over the years I have acquired correspondence between Stirling and other early dollar specialists. I also had a listing of Stirling's early silver dollars by grade and die variety (from the 1960s) that I got from another early dollar collector who lived in Baton Rouge, had known Stirling, and had seen his collection.

Around 1998 I attempted to contact a relative of Frank Stirling. My primary interest was research, although I was aware that much of his collection most likely was still in the hands of his family. I was hoping they had retained any notes or correspondence he might have had. I was nicely asked not to contact them again.

However, six years later, as luck and persistence will have it (and maybe a little serendipity) in October of 2004 I was contacted by a close friend of the Stirling family to attribute and appraise a collection of early silver dollars from the collection of Frank Stirling of Baton Rouge. I was unable to get to the new location (the silver dollars were no longer in Baton Rouge) of these silver dollars until the spring of 2005 due to an extended personal illness. The wait was well worth it. When I arrived, there were 61 early silver dollars (that they had brought home from long-term storage in the bank) out on the dining room table. And just as exciting for me, there was a thick notebook of Frank Stirling's correspondence and notes! There were letters from Milferd H. Bolender, W. G. "Farish" Baldenhofer, Mr. and Mrs. Alfred J. Ostheimer, Emanuel Taylor (who collected early silver dollars as well as Large Cents), Walter Breen, B. Max Mehl, and many other dealers and collectors of the 1940s through 1970s. Bolender, Baldenhofer, the Ostheimers, and Emanuel Taylor all had extensive die-variety collections of early silver dollars.

Among the Stirling correspondence I found the proof I'd been looking for. It was in a letter from James Kelly to Frank Stirling referring to the de Coppet collection and the work Frank had done attributing and cataloging de Coppet's dollars. The letter was dated December 11, 1954. Accompanying the letter was a receipt showing 390 early dollars were shipped and insured for \$12,500 (you could easily pick one of the 390 silver dollars today that would be worth this amount or more!).

We now have proof that James Kelly purchased 390 early silver dol-

lars from André de Coppet or his estate and that Randolph Zander was accurate in his reporting that "Jim Kelly's scout reportedly bought from the de Coppet hoard an incredible 400 pre-1804 U.S. 'daddy dollars.'" I personally believe the collection was a hoard (or accumulation). However, whether we call the 390 silver dollars a hoard or collection is not really all that important.

What is unfortunate is that a complete listing of these dollars (with Bolender numbers, sub-varieties, and Stirling's assigned grades) was nowhere to be found. Such a listing existed at one time, as it was mentioned in a letter from the early dollar specialist Emanuel Taylor to Frank Stirling dated May 12, 1955: "...Enclosed is your copy of the DeCoppet Collection, many, many, thanks for its use."

This still leaves open the question as to what happened with the balance of de Coppet's 390 early silver dollars. I was unsuccessful in bidding on lot 368, a complete set of 127 issues of James Kelly's *Kelly's Coins & Chatter* in the Charles Davis (May 7, 2005) sale of numismatic literature. According to Charles Davis (prior to the sale), at least one issue of *Kelly's Coins & Chatter* around the time had 125 attributed early dollars, most likely from the de Coppet collection. In addition, Frank Stirling's correspondence with Emanuel Taylor and Farish Baldenhofer mentioned both of these collectors buying early dollars from the de Coppet collection privately from James Kelly. Thus, it appears that some of the lots from Kelly's 1955 public auction sale may have even been sold prior to the sale in April 1955! Stirling also bought a few of the de Coppet dollars. Other de Coppet dollars probably appeared in later James Kelly auction sales. Thus, we can safely conclude that James Kelly eventually sold the entire collection of 390 early silver dollars.

As I stated earlier, I love a challenge and a good mystery. It only took me about twelve years to solve this one!

Book Review

J. F. Loubat, LL.D. *The Medallic History of the United States of America*. 2 vols. Folio. lxxx, 478, xvi, 86 pp. New York, 1878.

Joseph Florimond Loubat's *Medallic History*, was published over one hundred years ago. It is a sumptuous work, replete with solid scholarship and much else to recommend it, yet it did not attain popularity then nor has it since. With the benefit of more than a century of perspective, we intend to take a new look at Loubat's opus—assuredly a "magnum" opus judging by its weight—and then decide whether history has been fair in its assessment.

Medallic History did not suffer from a paucity of reviews at the time. In a 24-page promotional brochure (there are eight-page and four-page versions as well), the author collects no less than ten accounts published by the leading newspapers of the day, including the *New-York Tribune*, the *New York Sun*, the *Boston Daily Advertiser*, the *New-York Times*, and the *Gazette des Beaux-Arts*. One can speculate on the reasons for such extensive coverage, most of which is puff concentrating on the book's impressive statistics: \$20,000-\$25,000 cost of production, sixteen years of research, imported linen paper, hand-crafted printing and, of course, 170 superb etchings by Jules Jacquemart. *Medallic History* is indeed a technical triumph and it would not have taken a lot of effort for a reviewer to reach this conclusion.

The review by the *New-York Times* is a cut above the others. It provides an eloquent description of Loubat's odyssey across two continents in quest of a complete listing of our national medals. It weaves in the important roles played by such patriots as Franklin, Humphreys, and Jefferson in bringing the medals to life. If one had read the *Times* review, which occupies five of the 24 pages in the promotional brochure, one would certainly have purchased the book. We must conclude that the *Times* was not read by numismatists.

Loubat may have lavished too much attention on newspapers and not enough on numismatic periodicals. In the July 1878 issue of *Numisma*, Édouard Frossard wrote two columns of well measured praise which may well have been the price for an advertisement of the book that appears in this issue only. Coverage in the *American Journal of Numismatics* was more thoughtful.¹ Jeremiah Colburn listed all 86 medals described by Loubat at the end of his review, which begins with words of strong praise: "These beautiful volumes are an evidence of the taste, industry and assiduity of Dr. Loubat."² It is in the middle of this brief but pithy review that a verbal knife is inserted between the figurative ribs: "The first volume of the work contains correspondence in relation to the subject and engraving of the medals, with various resolutions, documents, and acts of Congress, *much of which is familiar to our readers, having been published in the Journal*"³ (emphasis ours). Here, Colburn is unfair in citing Appleton's article⁴ which lists early medals not authorized by Congress and therefore outside Loubat's clearly defined focus. However, Colburn's review is fair in citing a fair amount of material published by him that is duplicated by Loubat and, in particular, the discovery of the Diplomatic Medal by Professor Jules Marcou along with even earlier references to this important piece. In his own account of the Diplomatic Medal, Loubat made it sound like the discovery was his.⁵ Quite possibly Loubat did not read the *AJN*, but whether he did not read it or chose to ignore it, he lost the advocacy of this most influential publication.

Whereas *Medallic History* is a (mostly) accurate listing of the medals authorized by Congress, there was a good deal of "prior art." In addition to various articles in the *AJN*, the following authors published before Loubat:

Fisher, J. Francis. "Description of American Medals," *Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society* 3rd ser. 6 (1837): 286-293.

Mease, James. "Description of Some of the Medals Struck in Relation to Important Events in North America," *Collections of the New-York Historical Society* 3 (1821): 387-404.

1 AJN 13 (1878): 23.

2 *Ibid.*

3 *Ibid.*

4 AJN 2 (1867): 63-65.

5 AJN 9 (1875): 65, 78; Loubat XXVIII-XXIX.

Mease, James. "Description of Some of the Medals Struck in Relation to Important Events in North America," *Collections of the Massachusetts Historical Society* 3rd ser. 4 (1837): 297-308.

Vattemare, Alexandre. *Collection de monnaies et médailles de l'Amérique du Nord de 1652 à 1858, offerte à la Bibliothèque Impériale...* (Paris: A. Lainé & J. Havard, 1861).

Snowden, James Ross. "Report of the Director of the Mint," January 31, 1856.

Hart Charles H. "A Historical Sketch of the National Medals Issued Pursuant to Resolution of Congress, 1776-1815," *Proceedings of the Numismatic and Antiquarian Society of Philadelphia* (1867): 137-160.

These sources between them cover all the medals listed by Loubat through the Mexican War—indeed Vattemare's work alone covers all but two—and, in addition, these sources contain a fair number of the historic citations used in *Medallic History*. One must conclude that Loubat, who did not append a bibliography to his work, was a novice scholar and not a numismatist to boot.

Charles I. Bushnell, perhaps the most avid collector of historical medals in Loubat's time, is the only numismatic source cited: he (Bushnell) "kindly sent me plaster casts of an obverse and a reverse in which I at once recognized the Diplomatic medal, but neither bore the signature of Dupré." Loubat then relates how, in order to authenticate the medal, he returned to France to search widely and, at length, located obverse and reverse clichés that were in possession of the engraver's descendants.

Today, this story seems self-aggrandizing at best. Bushnell had obtained a bronze example of the Diplomatic Medal many years before, and if Loubat was unsatisfied with the plaster casts, he could have traveled a few blocks in Manhattan to see an original struck medal rather than scour all of France to view clichés. As to the point that neither [of the plaster casts] "bore the signature of Dupré," the same would have held true of Bushnell's medal as well as for any clichés made from dies used to strike that medal. Loubat obviously enjoyed traveling in Europe but much of that time could have been better spent in networking with numismatists in this country. An epitaph for his relations with the hobby is written in the sale catalogue for Bushnell's books, where lot 1391 was a copy of *Medallic History* that was uncut(!) and sold for \$21.00, a

30% discount from the then-current offering price. If Bushnell did not read Loubat, who did?

The first advertisements for the book note that: "As but a very limited edition has been printed, an early application is necessary to secure copies."⁶ This could not have been literally true, as the book has been freely available from then until now. More likely, a relatively limited number were bound and these constitute what George Kolbe calls the first edition.⁷ Some of these were given to prospective reviewers, some to prestigious institutions, and many to friends of the author. We have seen inscribed copies dated as late as 1891, so that it is likely that the author kept a supply on hand.

Emboldened by the many positive book reviews included in the supplements, Loubat then bound a second batch, with the eight-page supplement stitched at the end of the text volume. Apparently, the estimate of prospective demand was optimistic because it is this edition that, according to verbal tradition, ended up in the rafters of a Canadian barn. Dave Bowers, then with Bowers and Ruddy, recalls purchasing twenty sets through antiquarian book channels. Catherine Bullowa donated ten sets to the library of the American Numismatic Society. The mother lode of 140 sets was discovered by John J. Ford, Jr., who transferred them to Jon Hansen who, in turn, distributed them.⁸

With the benefit of hindsight, it is easy to depict Loubat as a man who held himself aloof from numismatic peers, an author who exaggerated his originality, and a publisher who flooded the market with copies of a slow-selling book. The two-volume set may have been worth the \$30 asking price, but that sum would then buy a gem 1793 wreath cent or a *Libertas Americana* medal in silver (which today sells for more than \$100,000). Criticism along such lines is perhaps deserved, but it must be made in a wider context that includes the merits of *Medallic History* as well.

Not least among the virtues of the book is its physical quality. At the outset of his introduction, Loubat noted that "in almost every country they [medals]...are made the subject of costly publications, illustrated

6 See, e.g., *Numisma*, September 1878.

7 See *The Asylum*, current issue.

8 The author interviewed Mr. Bowers, Ms. Bullowa, and Mr. Hansen as well as others with a memory of the hoard including George Kolbe, Warren Baker, and Charlie Davis. Some NBS member should write an article focused on the hoard exclusively.

by elaborate engravings, with carefully prepared letter-press descriptions and notes."⁹ In these respects, the author set himself the ambitious task of emulating van Loon, van Mieris, and the authors of *Les Médaillées de Louis le Grand*. Remarkably, he succeeded. The rich linen paper on which the printing is perfectly registered and the 170 meticulous engravings reflect the accomplishments of a world-class team of craftsmen working on both sides of the Atlantic. The physical book is a classic masterpiece in all but its binding and, be it said, the binding was intended quite likely to be replaced with a more sumptuous one of the purchaser's choosing. For the quality of his production, Loubat deserves the highest marks. It is not hyperbole to state that *Medallic History* is the most elegant work in all of United States numismatics. Today, the paper alone would require over \$4000 per two-volume set to duplicate!

Another credit to Loubat is the firm challenge he issued to our government. In 1855, James Ross Snowden, then Director of the United States Mint, had proposed that a separate department of his establishment be devoted to making medals and that each state be provided with copies of all (66) medals previously authorized.¹⁰ The new department was established but the provision of the earlier medals was executed only insofar as it was convenient. Many important dies were lost in the mists of time. Indeed, Loubat found the Preble dies serving as paper-weights in an obscure office of the Naval Department.¹¹ More incredible still, he found that the medal for Dr. Elisha Kent Kane, voted in 1857 by Congress for his Arctic explorations, had never been made.¹² It is a sad fact but, from its beginnings, our government has not paid our national medals due respect. Thomas Jefferson himself failed to procure the 350 sets of *Comitia Americana* medals proposed by Secretary for Foreign Affairs John Jay,¹³ approved by the Congress, and then fully funded by that body.¹⁴ Loubat had the courage to call the government to account for its neglect. Clear though the charges of neglect may have been, Loubat's words appear to have had little practical effect. Awareness of

9 Loubat VII.

10 James Ross Snowden, "Report of the Director of the Mint," January 31, 1856, p. 6.

11 Loubat XXXI.

12 Loubat XXVII.

13 *Journals of the Continental Congress* vol. 33, 421-423, July 11, 1787.

14 Willink and Van Staphorst to Jefferson, August 15 and 19, 1789, in Julian P. Boyd, ed.,

The Papers of Thomas Jefferson, vol. 15 (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1958), 342-344.

the import of the historical medal was low then and, to only a slightly lesser extent, remains so now.

In the age of the Internet, the collection of research material is a relatively simple matter. In Loubat's time, the process of gathering documents was a laborious task. Loubat had first to define his corpus—86 medals, including all of those authorized by Congress. No previous author had arranged the material from this perspective and none had achieved completeness. He then had to verify that these medals existed and, conversely, that there were no others that qualified. Corpus established, Loubat then assembled the history behind each, the authorizing votes, details of the design process, and details of the medal's execution. With no inclination to seek help from peers and with the original records scattered, the author was committed to an objective the achievement of which required years of painstaking effort fraught with regular disappointment. Indeed, only in the case of the Truxton medal where Loubat guessed (incorrectly) at its origins rather than tracking it to its roots, were the twin goals of complete and perfect knowledge at all compromised. Loubat labored until he got it right.

It is noteworthy that Sylvester Sage Crosby was attacking a similarly ambitious challenge at almost the exact same time. Comparing Crosby and Loubat, the quality of the scholarship is eerily similar. Both works have stood the test of time. The difference is that Crosby's work grew within the numismatic community and took only five years to complete. In contrast, Loubat labored on for fifteen years and he labored alone. One can only imagine the endurance required to complete this solo effort. Joseph Florimond Loubat may have been a dilettante in some respects. However, *Medallic History of the United States of America*, whatever its small imperfections, is a gigantic work. It is a "magnum opus" not only in its physical attributes but also in the quality and importance of its content. It establishes a worthy and inviting tradition that any numismatic scholar can be proud to join.

John W. Adams

Candidates for the 2005 Election of Officers for the Numismatic Bibliomania Society

Below are the statements sent in by those standing as candidates for the Numismatic Bibliomania Society for 2007-09. The candidates for the various positions are as follows:

- *President*: John W. Adams
- *Vice President*: Dan Hamelberg
- *Secretary/Treasurer*: David Sundman
- *Board of Trustees (six to be elected)*: Leonard Augsburger, Philip Carrigan, Dan Friedus, Joel J. Orosz, W. David Perkins, P. Scott Rubin, David J. Sklow

The candidates who have submitted statements are listed alphabetically below. All ballots must be received by July 20, 2007.

John W. Adams (President)

John Adams is a graduate of Princeton University and Harvard Business School. An investment banker by trade, his avocations are history and numismatics. This “mixed major” is well reflected by memberships in the Massachusetts Historical Society, the American Antiquarian Society, and the American Numismatic Society, in each of which he is also a fellow. His publications include over a hundred articles on a variety of numismatic subjects as well as five books: *United States Numismatic Literature, Volume I* (1982); *United States Numismatic Literature, Volume II* (1990); *The Indian Peace Medals of George III* (1999); *The Medals Concerning John Law and the Mississippi System* (2005); and *Comitia Americana and Related Medals* (2007).

Leonard Augsburger (Board)

Len Augsburger is a numismatic author and researcher whose work has appeared in *The Numismatist*, *Rare Coin Review*, *The Asylum*,

and other club publications. His work emphasizes unexplored areas of numismatics, utilizing new source material whenever possible. He has done research in state and national archives and numerous libraries and historical societies. He has delivered several ANA presentations, including the story of the Baltimore Hoard of 1934, which was given at the NBS meeting at the 2003 Baltimore ANA. This is now a book-length effort which has been accepted into the publishing queue at the Maryland Historical Society. Len has a working knowledge of several languages and has performed translations for the *MCA Advisory*. His current research project is Frank H. Stewart, owner of the first United States mint building, and the numismatic-themed art commissioned by Stewart in the early twentieth century. Len's collecting interests include seated coinage, American medals, and U.S. literature. He has been employed by Motorola since 1987, where he works in software engineering management for cellular phone and data networks. He is a member of the ANA, ANS, NBS, MCA, and LSCC, which he currently serves as Secretary-Treasurer.

Dan Hamelberg (Vice President)

I have been a serious collector of numismatic literature since George Kolbe's sale of the Lester Merkin's library. Did I get hooked. Adventures with Armand followed for many years. A few hoards later (Jack Collins, the Providence collection, Keith Kellman, Jeff Peck, Dan Freidus, and others) and a few major sales later (Katen, Champa, Ford) along with much serious searching and here I am with over 1,200 linear feet of bookshelf space and still counting. I am seriously out of control (just ask my wife) but a perfect candidate for vice-president of the NBS. The NBS has the greatest fraternity of collectors I have ever met. I started with coins as most do, but the books and the people who come with them are more interesting. I am currently the lucky curator of many special books, and welcome the opportunity to share. With the E-Sylum and many individual requests for information, I have been lucky to share my library with others. The backbone of the NBS is in the sharing of information. I am for it.

Joel J. Orosz (Board)

Joel J. Orosz, Ph.D., is a Charter Member (#59) and Life Member (#3)

of the Numismatic Bibliomania Society. He joined in 1982, and since that time has served as Editor of *The Asylum* (1985-1987), and member of the NBS Board of Trustees (1987-date). From 1987 until 2002, he was the author of "The Printer's Devil" column, and has been the most prolific contributor to *The Asylum* during the first quarter century of the journal's existence. He won the NBS Writer's Award in 1997, 1999, and 2000, and the Armand Champa Award in 1992.

Orosz is a 25-year member of the American Numismatic Association, one of the 250 worldwide Fellows of the American Numismatic Society, and also a member of the Numismatic Literary Guild and the Token and Medal Society. He is the author of one numismatic book, *The Eagle That is Forgotten: Pierre Eugene Du Simitiere, Founding Father of American Numismatics*, and numerous articles on early numismatists, such as Robert Gilmor, Jr., Jacob Giles Morris, and Dr. Lewis Roper. He won the ANA Wayte and Olga Raymond Literary Award in 1998, and the Heath Literary Award in 2000.

His priorities as an NBS board member will be to re-establish, under the new editor, regular publication of *The Asylum*; increase membership; seek better ways to integrate with the E-Sylum; and to increase the earned income of the NBS.

Orosz lives in Kalamazoo, Michigan with his wife, Florence, and their four children, ages 22 to 16. He is employed as Distinguished Professor of Philanthropic Studies at the Dorothy A. Johnson Center for Philanthropy and Nonprofit Leadership of Grand Valley State University.

W. David Perkins (Board)

W. David Perkins is a collector and researcher of the early United States silver dollars 1794-1803. Dave also collects tokens and numismatic literature, especially books, catalogs, and documents pertaining to the great early silver dollar collections and collectors.

Dave was a consultant to Bowers & Merena in the cataloging of the Eliasberg early silver dollars and has cataloged and consulted on early dollars for a number of numismatic auction firms. Dave was a major contributor to and wrote the introduction for Jules Reiver's new book, *The United States Early Silver Dollars, 1794 to 1803*. He has spoken on the early dollars at a number of ANA Numismatic Theatres and has taught a class on the dollars at the ANA Summer Conference.

Dave is a past Secretary / Treasurer of NBS. In addition to NBS, Dave is a member of numerous numismatic organizations and clubs including the ANA, ANS, JRCS (LM), NLG, EAC, TAMS, CWTS (LM), and others. Dave is an officer and is Treasurer of the John Reich Collector's Society. He has authored numerous articles for the *John Reich Journal* as well as articles for the *The Asylum*, *TAMS Journal*, *Civil War Token Journal*, *The Gobrecht Journal*, *NOW News*, and *Talkin' Tokens*. His articles have won literary awards from NLG, JRCS, CSTS, TAMS, and NOW. His interest in Civil War store cards (or tokens) started with a discovery that his great-great grandfather issued two Detroit, Michigan, Civil War tokens in 1863.

David J. Sklow (Board)

I am seeking reelection to the Board of Governors for the Numismatic Bibliomania Society. I am a Charter Member of NBS, a Life Member of ANA, and hold membership in numerous other numismatic organizations. I have been a collector for over 45 years, specializing in numismatic literature and ANA memorabilia. I operated a numismatic literature mail bid service in the 1980s from Oscoda, Michigan, and a full-service book store in Port St. Lucie, Florida, in the 1990s. I am a former partner in the Money Tree Numismatic Literature business. I am also the former Director of the ANA Library. I bring a vast amount of numismatic literature knowledge to the board that can help advance the goals of NBS in the future!

I would appreciate your vote, and will work for the good of all members, because first and foremost, the association belongs to its members.

David Sundman (Secretary/Treasurer)

David Sundman, President of the Littleton Coin Company of Littleton, New Hampshire, first learned about the fascinations of the rare coin field during his grade school years in the mid-1950s. He spent many afternoons after school and many Saturdays and each summer vacation working for his father, stamp and coin dealer Maynard Sundman. Maynard and his wife Fannie Sundman had founded the family firm, Littleton Stamp Company in 1945, and soon branched out into numismatics in 1949. David Sundman enjoyed both philately and numismatics,

and naturally developed a strong interest in history. He graduated from Gettysburg College with a BA in History in 1970, and several years later rejoined the family firm in 1972, by then employing more than a hundred. Today the firm is staffed with 342 full-time associates and is a major employer in the town of Littleton.

A lifetime member of the American Numismatic Association (ANA), Sundman celebrated his 28th year of ANA membership in 2007. In 2001, he received the ANA's Glenn Smedley Memorial Award, recognizing those who have worked to better the association. In 2003, he received the ANA's Medal of Merit for his active support of the Association's educational and promotional efforts. Mr. Sundman has received the ANA's top recruiter award five times, having recruited over 6,700 new members to the ANA to date.

A member of the American Numismatic Society since 1984, Sundman recently became a Life Fellow. He also is a member of the Professional Numismatists Guild, and received their Significant Contribution Award in 2001 for his consumer protection efforts. Sundman joined the Numismatic Bibliomania Society in 1982, and is now a Life Member.

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The Asylum

Vol. 25, No. 2

Consecutive Issue No. 96

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Front cover: Cover of the Ostheimers' copy of the Lester Merkin September 18, 1968, sale catalogue. Inside was a three-page auction settlement and an adding-machine tape providing important pedigree information to connect a number of early silver dollars with the collector W. G. Baldenhofer.

Editor's Introduction

Some readers have written to enquire about the numbering of the previous issue of *The Asylum*, and in particular why the numbering of what is meant to be a quarterly journal skipped from Volume 24 Number 2 to Volume 25 Number 1. This numbering is the result of a decision made, in consultation with the Board, around the end of December 2006.

The available choices were all somewhat unappealing. One option was to continue the numbering as usual, with the next issue being Volume 24 Number 3; this would keep the numbering sequence intact but would effectively prevent any attempt to keep volumes connected to particular years. Another option was to start a new volume for the new year (and new editorship); this would preserve the relationship between volumes and years but create the appearance of a gap in the numbering sequence. Perhaps the simplest option would have been to call Volume 24's second issue Numbers 2-4, but that issue had already been sent to the printer.

The consensus, therefore, was for the second choice, to start a new Volume 25 for 2007. So all of you readers who have wondered whither Volume 24 Numbers 3 and 4 have disappeared now know the answer.

David Yoon

EZEKIEL I. BARRA AND HENRY WADSWORTH LONGFELLOW: “SOMETHING ABOUT COINS”—AND PROVENANCE

Joel J. Orosz

Listen collectors and you shall know
Of a coin book owned by Longfellow.
Yes, the poet whose muse spoke so clear
In “The Midnight Ride of Paul Revere,”
Owned a library numismatic,
Or, to be somewhat less emphatic,
A single pamphlet to gird his loins:
E. I. Barra’s “Something About Coins.”

Lest you conclude that the subtitle of this article should be “Something About Doggerel,” let me say that it does focus on a numismatic publication, and a very rare and significant one at that: the very first numismatic title emitted from the nation’s west coast, Ezekiel I. Barra’s “Something About Coins.” Ironically enough, this pamphlet, which ran off the press in San Francisco during the year 1863, spent most of the next fourteen decades in the eastern metropolises of Boston and New York City before migrating, fittingly enough, to a city closer to the shores of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow’s “Gitche Gumee.”

Reconstructing the wanderings of Barra’s pioneering pamphlet from 1863 to 2006 made for a fascinating search project, and I hope, for an interesting read; a biblionumismatic detective story with a variegated cast of characters: an argonaut of ‘49, a beloved American poet, a Beacon Hill Brahmin, a brash Big Apple bibliophile, another bookish Bostonian, and finally, a curious Kalamazooan.

The story begins, of course, with an intrepid Gold Rush argonaut, Ezekiel I. Barra. Like thousands of his countrymen, Barra was gripped

by gold fever in 1849, and sailed from Philadelphia for a town until only lately known as Yerba Buena, namely, San Francisco. Being blessed with a facile pen, Barra wrote in 1893 a highly readable, although not factually bulletproof, book about the voyage: *A Tale of Two Oceans, A New Story by an Old Californian: An Account of a Voyage from Philadelphia to San Francisco Around Cape Horn, 1849-50, Calling at Rio de Janeiro, Brazil and Juan Fernandez in the South Pacific*. It is a bulletproof fact, however, that Barra was the first to sell a coin collection of any consequence (it included a complete date set of large cents) on the west coast, at the auction house of L. Keller, in San Francisco, on February 19-20, 1866. (Q. David Bowers, as usual, has written the best account of Barra's numismatic exploits; see pages 160-67 of his *A California Gold Rush History*).

In 1863, precisely thirty years before he wrote *A Tale of Two Oceans*, Barra wrote a small (sextodecimo) pamphlet of 31 pages, with a much shorter title: "Something About Coins." Partly a series of history lessons, partly a description of coins in the author's collection, partly a plug for the hobby of numismatics, Barra's pamphlet, modest in both size and content, made but little impression on the emerging field of U.S. numismatics. Its existence was noted by Emmanuel J. Attinelli on page 103 of *Numisgraphics*, but few copies of "Something About Coins" seem to have survived; by the twentieth century, it had become a *rara avis* in the numismatic bibliophile's aviary. Barra's pamphlet was not present in the George Fuld, Essex Institute, Armand Champa, Katen Library, or Harry Bass sales, nor was it listed in Charles Davis's *American Numismatic Literature*. By the turn of the twenty-first century, Barra's precedent-setting work seemed one of those ethereal entries—akin to the fabled large paper edition of *Numisgraphics* itself—that had existed in Attinelli's day, but had since regrettably gone extinct.

Like the coelacanth, however, "Something About Coins proved to be a "living fossil," and it was the brash Big Apple bibliophile who demonstrated that at least one copy was still among the living. John J. Ford was a man of many parts—an inventor, a salesman, an operative for Army intelligence during the Second World War—almost literally a tinker, tailor, soldier, and spy. Like his vast collection of coins, medals, and paper money, his superb collection of numismatic literature was secreted first in his natal city of New York, then at his retirement home

in Arizona, before finally surfacing in George Frederick Kolbe's sales of the Ford library in 2004 and 2005. Many an obscure publication emerged into the marketplace for the first time in decades, and among them was a surviving copy of "Something About Coins."

Alas, though, it was a wounded survivor, for according to Kolbe's description for lot 167 of his sale on June 1, 2004, an inscription had been removed on page 2, with resulting loss of text on page 3. He also noted that there was a void in the middle of the front cover, which was partially covered, front and back, by two paper cutouts of the Boston Numismatic Society (BNS) seal. Defaced though it may have been, rare is rare (Kolbe noted that this was the first copy he had encountered during his 39 years as a numismatic bibliophile), and "Something About Coins" was purchased by the bookish Bostonian, John Weston Adams, and added to his incomparable collection of Attinelliana.

A little more than two years later, however, Adams elected to sell his aggregation of Attinelli esoterica, and in Kolbe's Sale 101, October 19, 2006, Barra's modest pamphlet made its second appearance on the auction block in two years. It was captured by the author of this article, the curious Kalamazooan. That curiosity begat a fascinating, and unexpectedly poetic, quest for the provenance of my copy of "Something About Coins."

The immediate impetus for reconstructing the ownership chain was that void in the front wrapper, or rather, the intriguing pair of paper seals of the BNS, which partially concealed this insult to the pamphlet's integrity. The missing portion of the cover, shaped like a transposed outline of the island of Cuba, was not completely covered by the BNS seals, glued back-to-back, but at least they did serve the purpose of preventing the gash from spreading.

The BNS seals also served another useful purpose, that of evoking the memory of the Beacon Hill Brahmin, for if any one man in the nineteenth century personified the BNS, it was William Sumner Appleton. Born in 1840, the product of his father Nathan's second marriage, William was in the fortunate position of being able to devote his life to collecting and scholarship. He joined the BNS as a charter member upon its formation in 1860, and was promptly elected its secretary, a post he filled faithfully for decades. Appleton's coin collection was rumored to be larger than those of all the other BNS members combined, and his

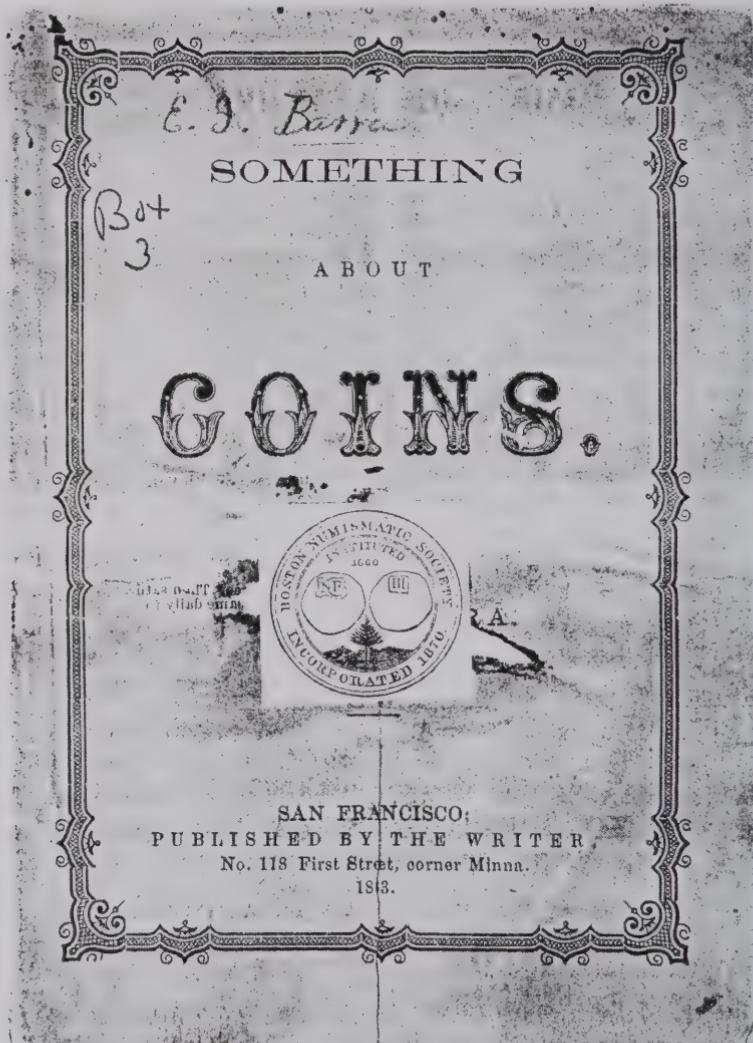


Figure 1. Cover of "Something About Coins" showing damage covered by BNS seal.

numismatic library was similarly outsized. Might he have been the one to place the BNS seals on either side of the wounded wrapper?

I turned, therefore, to Thomas Elder's sale of the William Sumner Appleton library, held on May 10, 1913. Sure enough, lot 319 offered a copy of "Something About Coins," described as "Rare pamphlet, first

I have seen or heard of." This was significant, for Tom Elder had been a dealer for a decade by 1913, and an active one, at that. That Barra's work was completely new to him, as it was to Kolbe some years later, underscores the work's great rarity. The remainder of the description, however, provided quite a surprise: "Bears autograph; 'Professor Longfellow. Respects of E. I. Barra.'"

Whether Barra was acquainted with Henry Wadsworth Longfellow before he left the East for the gold fields is an open question. Barra could certainly have admired Longfellow from afar, however, for in 1863 the poet was a Harvard professor with many celebrated works in print, including "The Village Blacksmith," "The Song of Hiawatha," and "Paul Revere's Ride," so Barra may have inscribed a copy to him without ever having encountered him in person. But the inscription created a complication in the effort to trace my copy of "Something About Coins" to Appleton, for my copy most definitely does not contain an inscription by the author to Longfellow. Then I recalled the missing fragment from the interior page.

Just as Kolbe had described, the top of the second page (the first after the title page), was missing an irregular piece from its top, about one inch at its widest point, the result of a clean tear. Upon examining the pamphlet closely, I noticed another rarity about this rarity: Kolbe had made a slight error in describing it. According to his description in both the Ford Sale and his 101st sale, the missing piece was on page 2, with a slight loss of text on page 3. In "Something About Coins," the title page is counted as page 1; its blank verso (where John J. Ford's conjoined "JF" bookplate resides), is page 2, so the lost portion is on page 3, with the loss of text on page 4.

A more germane point than pagination is that fragments and "ghosts" of the estrayed inscription remain in the pamphlet today. The fragments consist of a downstroke and a downloop in brown ink, both found beneath the tear on page 3. The "ghosts" are found on page 5, where there are pressure indentations and numerous points and short lines of bleed-through. These relics of the now-lost inscription are arranged into two discernable lines. The first letter on the top line appears, from the bleed-through on page 5, to have contained a loop, as in the top of a capital "P." The last three letters in the last word of the bottom line appear (again, from the bleed-through), to be "ira," which could represent

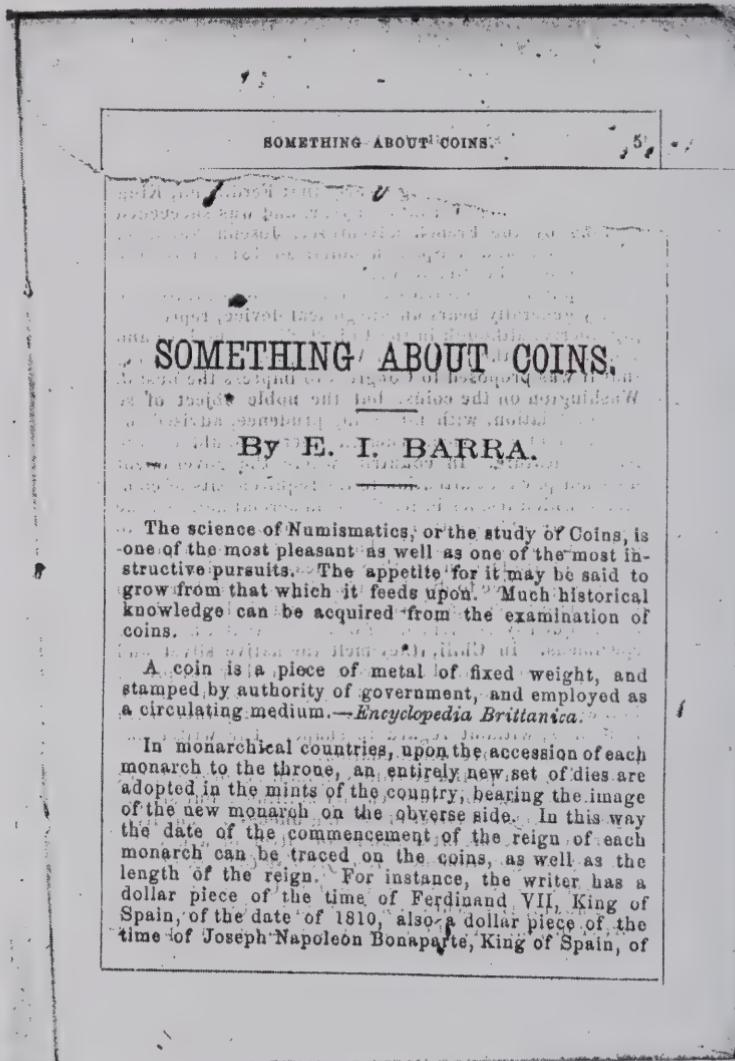


Figure 2. Page 3 of "Something About Coins" showing where the inscription was torn off.

parts of the last three letters of "Barra." The fragments also are very suggestive. The downstroke at the beginning of the bottom line could be from a capital "R," and the downloop from the same line could be from the "f" of the word "of." There can be no doubt that this copy of

“Something About Coins” was inscribed at one time, but the surviving fragments and “ghosts” are not conclusive. We can say, however, that the surviving data are certainly consistent with the inscription as Elder had copied it, and the size of the piece excised from page 3 is appropriate for a two-line inscription.

Does this mean that the Appleton copy in the Elder sale is the very one that John J. Ford later purchased and which then appeared in the two Kolbe sales? The sheer rarity of “Something About Coins” argues in favor of that proposition. Weighing against it is the fact that Elder did not mention the BNS seals on the front cover. Elder, however, was notorious for his terse cataloguing descriptions, so failing to mention the seals would be right in character. In addition, the fact that the copy in the Elder sale was inscribed, and the copy in the Kolbe sales had been inscribed, suggests that they could be the same. Add to that evidence provided by the fragments and ghosts, and by the appropriate amount of space occupied by the original inscription, and the cumulative evidence does not prove, but certainly suggests, that the Appleton copy and my copy are one and the same.

Moreover, the very fact that the inscription was torn from the pamphlet implies that it was the dedication described by Elder: “Professor Longfellow. Respects of E. I. Barra.” These dedicatory lines can be read in two ways. While most would read it (as I do), as an inscription written by the author to the poet, it could also be interpreted as lines written by Longfellow himself. If read in that way, an autograph collector could have removed the inscription in the belief that it was written in the great poet’s hand.

While some doubts remain about whether Appleton’s copy is the same as mine, there can be little uncertainty as to why “Something About Coins” would have been transferred from Longfellow to Appleton. According to Louise Hall Tharp’s *The Appletons of Beacon Hill*, in 1843 the poet married Appleton’s half-sister, Frances Elizabeth (Fanny) Appleton. She predeceased Longfellow, and he himself died in 1882. As a brother-in-law by marriage, and as the family numismatist, William Sumner Appleton would be the logical person to inherit “Something About Coins.” On the other hand, Longfellow, who does not seem to have had any other predilection for coins, may have given the pamphlet to his brother-in-law earlier, perhaps as early as 1863.

While there is no doubt that Appleton owned a copy of the pamphlet, there is some question about whether he owned it continuously, or whether it took a temporary detour to the BNS library before coming back for the Elder sale in 1913. The possible trajectories become a bit complicated, and to tell the story, it will be necessary to revisit an old “Printer’s Devil” column by the author of this article, namely “Colburn’s Cogan: An Exercise in Provenance,” published in the Winter 2001 issue of *The Asylum*.

In that column, I reconstructed the ownership chain of a large paper copy of Edward Cogan’s May 21-22, 1860, sale of the Alfred Taylor collection, beginning with this copy being given to the BNS by Jeremiah Colburn in 1860, very nearly up to my purchase of this piece in 1998. During my research, I discovered that the BNS had fallen on hard times during the 1890s, due to excessive concern about provenance (that of their prospective new members, not of coins or books), and in 1898, its dwindling membership voted to donate its cabinet of coins to the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, and its library to the Boston Public Library, along with \$300 to each institution to provide for the maintenance of the collections. In recognition of Appleton’s status as a founding member, and also for his 38 years of faithful service as Secretary, however, the BNS allowed him to reserve any of the Society’s coins or books that he wanted for his personal collection. The BNS records show that he chose five books and a dozen pamphlets.

If Appleton had kept “Something About Coins” continuously from the time he got it from Longfellow until his death in 1903 (and his heirs kept it in his estate until the 1913 Elder sale), then the BNS story is an irrelevant aside. If, on the other hand, Appleton had donated it to the BNS library sometime after getting it from Longfellow (a possibility made plausible not only by the BNS seals on the cover, but also by the penciled notations on the cover of Barra’s name and “Box 3”), then it was one of the dozen pamphlets he reserved for his own library in 1898. Interestingly, the BNS seals on the front wrapper could provide evidence for either scenario, for they could have been placed there by the BNS librarian, or by Appleton, who as secretary would have had ready access to a supply of them.

Other mysteries cling to Barra’s slim pamphlet. Who purchased it in the 1913 Elder sale? From whom, and when, did John J. Ford acquire

it? And, most intriguing, who was the biblioclast who ripped out Barra's inscription to Longfellow? We know that the vandalism occurred some time between the Elder sale in 1913 and the first Kolbe sale in 2004. We can absolve, I believe, the only suspect that we can identify by name: John J. Ford. Although there is no arguing that Ford could at times behave outrageously, anyone who remembers, as I do, his obsessive concern for the conservation of his books-his careful provision of archival storage conditions, his careful mending with methyl cellulose Japanese paper, his insistence on using gloves to handle his volumes-make it inconceivable that he would defile one of his own pamphlets. I am certain, therefore, that the inscription had been removed before Ford acquired it.

After carefully weighing all of the evidence at hand, therefore, this much of the provenance of "Something About Coins" can be reconstructed:

1. 1863: Inscribed by Barra to Henry Wadsworth Longfellow
2. 1863-1882: Passes, either by gift or by inheritance, from Longfellow to his half brother-in-law, William Sumner Appleton
3. Ca. 1884, possibly donated by Appleton to BNS library; if so, reclaimed by him in 1898 when most of that library is donated to the Boston Public Library. Alternatively, it may have been in Appleton's library continuously for the balance of his life
4. 1903: Enters Appleton's estate; possibly inherited, along with the rest of his numismatic library, by a relative or a friend
5. 1913: Appears as lot 319 of Thomas Elder's sale of the William Sumner Appleton Library, May 10, 1913.
6. 1913-ca. 1950s: One or more unknown owners. During these years, inscription on p. 3 is removed, causing loss of text on p. 4.
7. Ca. 1950s: Acquired by John J. Ford, Jr. from an unknown source, with his conjoined "JF" bookplate on verso of title page
8. 2004: Appears as lot 167 in George Frederick Kolbe's June 1, 2004, sale of the John J. Ford Library; acquired by John Weston Adams
9. 2006: Appears as lot 708 in George Frederick Kolbe's 101st sale, October 19, 2006; acquired by Joel J. Orosz

Ezekiel I. Barra's "Something About Coins" is a memorable example of numismatic Americana by any lights; it is rare in absolute terms, significant

for its pioneering West Coast origin, and romantic for its linkages to “the days of old, the days of gold, the days of '49.” Its newly-uncovered provenance definitely adds more luster, from its presentation by the author to one of America’s most beloved poets (the first poet from the United States to be honored in Westminster Abbey’s celebrated “Poet’s Corner”), to its ownership by at least three great numismatists, William Sumner Appleton, John J. Ford, and John Weston Adams, whose years of activity span most of the of the history of the coin hobby in the United States. Despite the damage it has suffered, despite the vandalism that it has endured, “Something About Coins” has the dignity that comes with a respectable ancestry and an enduring run in our unforgiving world. Now completely deacidified, it is being preserved by its current steward, for the delight and edification of the future links in its ownership chain. Just as there is “something about coins,” there is also something about provenance, something about the eventful past of this battered but unbowed pamphlet that will speak to its owners yet unknown and unborn, when at last they are ready to assume their place in its history.

Who Was Farish Baldenhofer?

W. David Perkins

In November 1955 Stack's offered for sale the *Farish Baldenhofer Collection of U.S. Coins*. The first page inside the catalogue cover reads, "Farish Baldenhofer *et al* / United States Gold, Silver and Copper Coins / To be sold at public auction sale November 11, 12, 1955." The heading on the first page of the sale of the First Session also notes, "The Farish Baldenhofer Catalogue."

Unfortunately, no background information is given in the catalogue as to who was "Farish Baldenhofer." Was Farish Baldenhofer a real person, or a made-up name for the sale?

My primary interest in acquiring a copy of this sale catalogue in 1996 was to learn more about the Baldenhofer collection of early United States silver dollars. I had come across the Baldenhofer name associated with a number of the early dollars in the Superior Stamp and Coin Co., Inc., A.N.A. AUCTION SALE August 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 1975 ('75 ANA Sale). There was an extensive run of early dollars by die marriage, virtually complete by Bolender number (M. H. Bolender, *The United States Early Silver Dollars from 1798-1803*, first published in 1950). The majority of these were from the Ostheimer collection. Many of the Ostheimer coins were also pedigreed to the W. G. Baldenhofer collection.

The first session in the Stack's 1955 *Farish Baldenhofer Collection* sale included a nice run of Colonial coins; U.S. half cents including three 1793 half cents, examples of the rare 1810 and 1811 half cents along with four proof (only) specimens; a 1799 Large Cent called "extremely fine" and very rare; Small Cents, two-cent and three-cent pieces; nickels, dimes, and quarter dollars, including an 1827 quarter in proof. The second session opened with U.S. commemorative half dollars; early U.S. half dollars including mint-state 1796 and 1797 examples along with a proof-like 1838-O rarity and Barber half dollars.

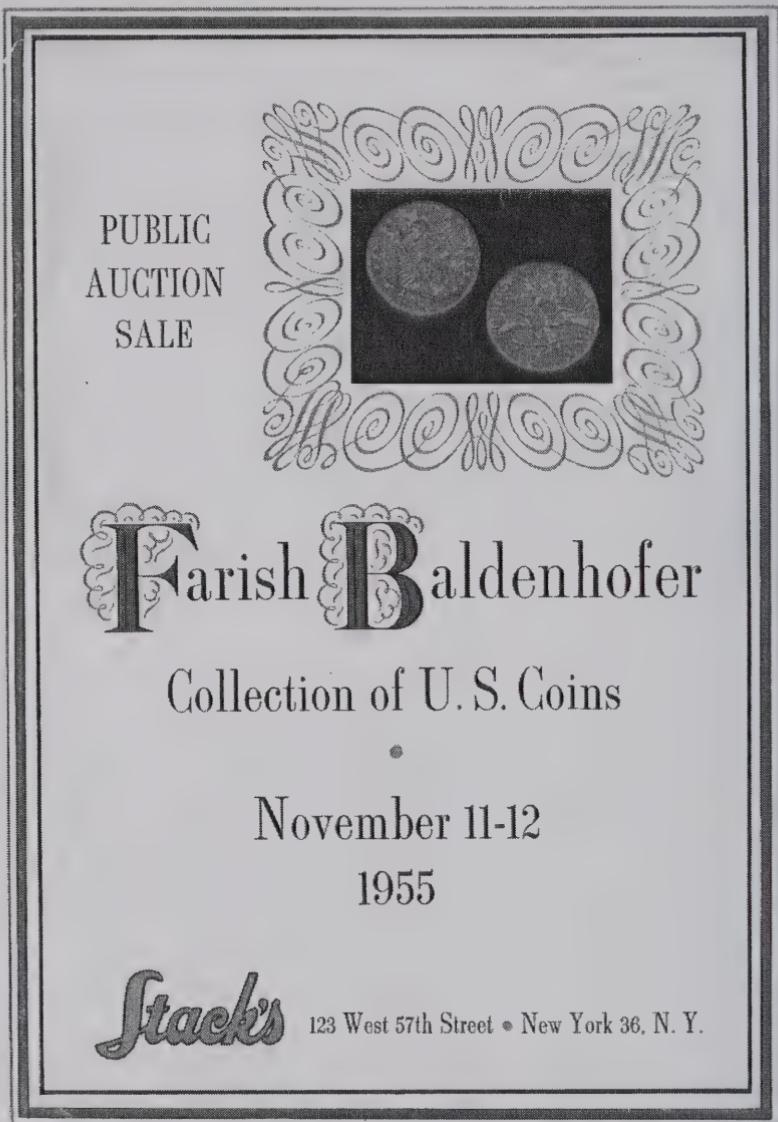


Figure 1. Front cover of the November 11-12, 1955, Stack's sale of the *Farish Baldenhofer Collection of U.S. Coins*. The prices realized for this sale are bound with the same cover as was used for the sale catalogue.

The Liberty Walking half dollars started with lot 869. This was the first mention in the sale of Mr. Baldenhofer. It noted,

Note: The following coins were assembled after many years of careful searching by Mr. Baldenhofer. He felt that this set was about the best one he could find and as the lots indicate, he went all out to acquire the finest specimens obtainable.

Baldenhofer's duplicate set of Liberty Walking half dollars commenced with lot 911. The introduction to this set noted,

Note: Mr. Baldenhofer, after completing the painstaking task of building one set of Liberty Walking Half Dollars, decided to try to duplicate his first feat. The following coins were the result of his second effort. He also realized that with the ever advancing market in these Half Dollars they, too, were a good investment....

I was disappointed to learn that this 1955 Baldenhofer sale had only nineteen early (1794-1803) silver dollars. This comprised what most numismatists would call a "date and major type set." In addition, the condition and rarity of this group of coins was not comparable to the coins attributed to Baldenhofer in the '75 ANA Sale.

Seated and Trade Dollars followed the early silver dollars. The third session opened with commemoratives and patterns, followed by gold. U.S. eagles were offered starting with lot 1427. The cataloger noted,

The following group of early \$10.00 gold pieces is one of the finest groups every offered at Public Auction. Mr. Baldenhofer endeavored to assemble as many varieties of these early gold coins as was possible. Quality was uppermost in his endeavors.

It does not appear that the early dollars in this 1955 sale were consigned by Baldenhofer, and if they were, this was surely not his primary die-variety set. So the question remained as to what had happened to Baldenhofer's early dollar die-variety collection. When and where was it dispersed? Privately, or at public auction?

From the '75 ANA Sale one can see that Baldenhofer had quite a few early dollars, including some extreme rarities. For example, Baldenhofer discovered the extremely rare 1798 B-32 dollar. His discovery, along with a photo of the discovery specimen, was featured in an article in the June 1957 issue of *The Numismatist*, page 651. Frank Stirling, a

Baton Rouge, Louisiana, early dollar specialist, authored the article at Mr. Baldenhofer's request. This specimen of the 1798 B-32 dollar was first offered publicly as lot 853 in the '75 ANA Sale, with the pedigree, "Ex. Baldenhofer, Ostheimer." From this sale it became clear that the Ostheimer collection included many of the early dollars formerly in the Baldenhofer collection, but overall only about half of the total number of early dollar die marriages known at the time. If Baldenhofer collected by die marriage, as it appears he did, where are the other silver dollars from his collection and if they did, how and where did the Ostheimers acquire them?

I double-checked in John W. Adams' *United States Numismatic Literature*, and this 1955 Stack's sale was the only mention of Baldenhofer. I was aware that Lester Merkin's *Public Auction Sale—September 18, 1968* (Merkin '68 Sale) had a number of Gobrecht and Seated Dollars pedigreed to Baldenhofer. On page 54 the cataloger noted, "Most proofs 1836-73 were from the Baldenhofer collection." But there was no reference to the 1955 Farish Baldenhofer sale, nor did the pedigrees match in these two sales. None of the early dollars in the Merkin '68 Sale were mentioned as being from the Baldenhofer collection, nor pedigreed to the same.

From the pedigrees in the '75 ANA Sale and the Merkin '68 Sale it became apparent that Baldenhofer had a large number of silver dollars that were not part of the 1955 Stack's sale. The question still remained as to how the Ostheimers had acquired part or possibly all of Baldenhofer's silver dollars (prior to these 1968 and 1975 public auction sales). It was time for serendipity, or at least a little luck.

I'm not sure of the exact date, but sometime in the early 1990s Art Rubino, a Santa Fe, New Mexico, rare book dealer, was set up at a Denver coin show. At some point I noticed some tall bookshelves located in a back row of the show. I introduced myself to Art. I remember asking Art if he had any auction catalogues; he said most were in boxes on the floor, under the other tables.

I looked through some of the boxes and soon came across a familiar and favorite sale catalogue of mine, a copy of the Merkin '68 Sale. And right under it was another, but this one at once caught my eye. At the top was written "Mr. Ostheimer." There were four red, hand-drawn arrows pointing to the obverse and reverse of two coins plated on the

cover, an 1870-S silver dollar and a high grade and very rare 1795 B-3 dollar. In the lower right corner and written in red was "My Estimate" and in blue "Realized." Was I excited!

I pulled the catalogue from the plastic cover and quickly went to the early dollar lots (which I had studied and by now knew by heart). Sure enough, there were notations in pencil and red ink. But even more exciting to me was a three-page, detailed auction settlement along with a paper adding-machine tape, marked "Cost Baldenhofer"! I asked Art where he gotten these catalogues and he stated, "From the Ostheimers—they had a home in Santa Fe." I then asked if he had anything else from the Ostheimers and he said this was all he had left. I bought both copies of the Merkin '68 Sale and went off to study one of them in more detail.

It didn't take long to compare the adding-machine tape to the detailed auction settlement, lot by lot. I now had what I'd been searching for all those years—a fairly good idea of the overall content of the Baldenhofer collection of early silver dollars by die marriage. The silver dollars in both the Baldenhofer and the Ostheimer collections went beyond just the early dollars. The collections were inclusive from early dollars to Morgan and Peace Dollars, including Lesher and Pattern Dollars.

I now knew Baldenhofer had an extensive collection of silver dollars, and I also had a pretty good idea of what silver dollars were in his collection at one time. I still did not know much else about Baldenhofer. I also did not know how or when the Ostheimers acquired his silver dollar collection.

In the year 2000 I set about trying to find someone related to the Ostheimers, hoping to find records of their collection, correspondence, and / or notes. I posted a request on a genealogy forum, and received a reply in the fall of 2000. It turned out that Mrs. Ostheimer was still alive and was living in Santa Fe, New Mexico. I began corresponding with Mrs. Ostheimer and asked her if she still had any items pertaining to her early dollar collecting. She told me she that still had her notes from when she and Bolender were planning to write a book together! She also told me that she had all of her records in storage at a home in Florida, and that when she had a chance she would look for this. She eventually located the box and had it shipped to Santa Fe.

Mrs. Ostheimer later invited me to visit her home in Santa Fe. I was living in Colorado when I first began corresponding with her; I

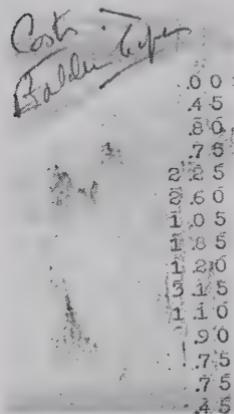


Figure 2. Part of an adding machine tape marked "Cost Baldenhofer." The amounts correspond to costs written by hand next to lots in the Ostheimers' copy of the Merkin '68 Sale catalogue. From this it was possible to figure out which lots came from the Baldenhofer collection.



Figure 3. Obverse and reverse of an almost uncirculated 1799/8 B-1 silver dollar. This was purchased by the author from a 1988 Bowers & Merena sale with no pedigree noted; in 1994 the author identified it as lot 272 in the Merkin '68 sale and therefore *ex* Ostheimer collection. From the adding machine tape and the Boldender invoice, it turns out that it was also *ex* Baldenhofer.

later changed jobs and moved to Wisconsin for two years. It was a few years before I was able to get to Santa Fe. Was it worth the wait! Mrs. Ostheimer had retained a large volume of files, correspondence, notes, and records of their collection, which I was able to acquire.

Included was correspondence from M. H. Bolender to the Ostheimers, leading up to the acquisition by Bolender and for the

Ostheimers of the Baldenhofer collection of silver dollars! I now had a detailed record of the Baldenhofer collection as it was in December 1959 when Bolender acquired it, including commentary on rarity and condition census, pedigree information, and the Ostheimers' cost for each specimen. For example, a 1794 dollar was listed on an invoice (typed on Bolender's personal stationery) as follows:

1794 B-1 Unc. Formerly in the collections of H. A. [sic] Granberg of Oshkosh, Wisconsin, Waldo Newcomer of Baltimore, Maryland, banker, William H. Woodin, Col. Green, Jerome Kern. One of the 3 or 4 best known, very rare.

Our Cost \$6,250.

The listing was seven pages long, and ended with a proof 1921 Morgan Dollar at a cost of \$110. Interestingly, there were no Trade Dollars as part of this purchase. Perhaps Baldenhofer did not collect these, or maybe the Trade Dollars in Stack's 1955 Farish Baldenhofer sale were from the Baldenhofer collection (although this was not noted in the sale catalogue).

I now knew quite a bit regarding the Baldenhofer early silver dollar collection, but still not much about W. G. "Farish" Baldenhofer himself: so back to the Internet. I first learned from a Google search that W. G. Baldenhofer was connected to The Thompson Grinder Company in Ohio, and that the company had been founded by a C. Baldenhofer. Thus I posted the following on an Internet genealogy forum in April 2005:

W. G. "Farish" Baldenhofer, Clark Cty., Springfield, Ohio

I am looking for information on a W. G. "Farish" Baldenhofer of Springfield, Ohio (Clark County). In the 1950s he was working on a book with a Walter Breen.¹ He also was corresponding with a Frank Stirling of Baton Rouge, LA.

I believe he owned The Thompson Grinder Company. His father may have been a C. Baldenhofer, 1874-1953.

I have information to share. Thanks.

Approximately five months later, on September 14, 2005, I received an e-mail reply from a relative of Baldenhofer. She wrote, "I stumbled

¹ Baldenhofer and Breen were discussing publishing a book on the early silver dollars together, according to letters in the Ostheimers' possession.

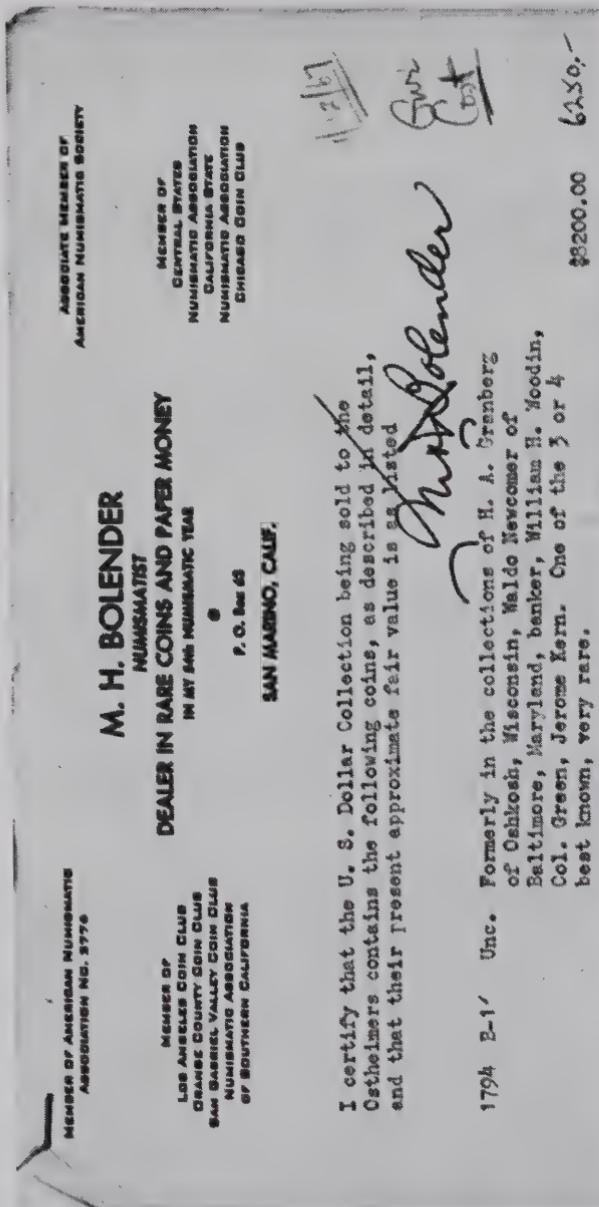


Figure 4. Top portion of the Bolender invoice for the purchase and sale of the Baldenhofer collection of early U.S. silver dollars to the Osthimers. The sale took place in December 1959.

across your search for W. G. Baldenhofer. You mentioned that he wrote a book that was never published. I am really interested in your connection and I may also be able to help you with some info."

A note dated September 16, 2005, had some good information on Baldenhofer as a businessman and a collector:

Bill Baldenhofer was my great uncle - my great aunt was actually my blood relative. Uncle Bill and Aunt Carol were great people, but they didn't really share their family business with the limited family that we have. Sadly, they had no children but my Dad was the only nephew on my Aunt's side and Uncle Bill had a niece on his side.

Tragically, there was a fire in the early sixties and they lost everything. I was in elementary school and remember seeing the site - a deputy was guarding the remains but they salvaged nothing to my knowledge. As you can imagine - it was the biggest loss in Clark County history - but they did bounce back and rebuild. They were also collectors of oriental antiques - Bill had done a great deal of business in Japan after the war and built up quite a collection. The fire took everything but after rebuilding on the spot - they collected again. I don't think he ever got back into coin collecting again but it sounds like he was a remarkable collector in his day. In 1978 they were gone for a few days and around \$100,000 of oriental antiques were stolen from the property. Some were recovered by the FBI in the Cleveland Museum...but the crime was never solved. All of the recovered antiques were donated to Wittenberg University in Springfield.

He was the owner of Thompson Grinder and had quite a few patents in his name. Your assumption of C. Baldenhofer as his father was correct - his name was Christian.

The only paper items I have from Uncle Bill would be post-fire. There is nothing concerning coins - mostly correspondence to antique dealers about the oriental collection. I believe Uncle Bill passed away around 1980 ... Aunt Carol died in 1990. She was a great lady and we were very close. I learned more about my Uncle Bill after he passed away than I ever knew while he was living. I believe he was a brilliant and giving man...and I am saddened that I didn't really get to know him closely.

Numismatists and collectors today can be thankful that the fire took place after the Stack's sale in 1955 and after Bolender purchased the Baldenhofer silver dollar collection in December 1959. On the other hand, Baldenhofer's records, notes, and correspondence appear to have been lost in the fire.

I learned from her that the Baldenhofer's first name was William (her "Uncle Bill"). I shared all the information I had with her, including information on the "Farish" Baldenhofer sale. In addition, she wrote to me on September 22, 2005:

I am not sure how the name Farish was used... but Dick Farish was a business partner of my Uncle I believe. My mom thinks he built their first house... but is still trying to remember more about him. Uncle Bill was very private about his business but she does remember his name....

I will ask my Uncle's niece for more info. about the Baldenhofer's. Ohio State (University) had a nice write up about my Uncle when he passed - I will try to find it as well.

A copy of an obituary I received lists a Richard C. Farish as an honorary pallbearer at the funeral. I assume this is the business partner referenced earlier and probably the origin of the "Farish" in the sale name of the Farish Baldenhofer catalogue. I'm not sure why this name for the sale was chosen. I sent an e-mail note on September 23, 2005, to Vicken Yegparian at Stack's asking if they might be able to help with any information on the consignor and this 1955 auction sale. Vicken replied:

It was actually Harvey Stack who went to Columbus to pick up the "Farish Baldenhofer Collection." He does not recall whether the silver dollars offered in the Farish Baldenhofer Catalogue belonged to the Baldenhofer Collection. According to Harvey, Stack's was instructed by Baldenhofer to use the name Farish Baldenhofer, but he doesn't remember the reason why.

I was able to acquire a photo of William G. Baldenhofer and two different copies of his obituary. Neither copy is dated or gives the source (newspaper or other). My contact noted, "I believe he died on March 8, 1980."

William G. Baldenhofer, author of more than 200 industrial patents related to high-speed, precision grinding machines and a pioneer in the computer operations of such machines, died at 7:05pm Saturday in Mercy Medical Center after several months of failing health. He was 76.

Baldenhofer, of 4222 Grant Rd., was the retired president of the former Thompson Grinder Co. and more recently was a consultant with Kraft Associates of Springfield.

He was born in Springfield on September 17, 1903, the son of Christian and Dora Ganser Baldenhofer. He served on the board of directors

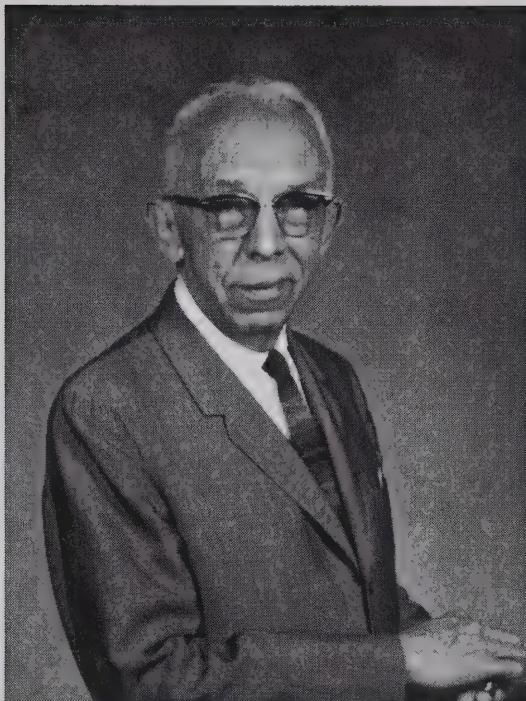


Figure 5. Photo of William G. Baldenhofer obtained from a niece. Baldenhofer resided in Springfield, Ohio, all his life.

of St. John's Nursing and Convalescing Center and was a member of St. John's Evangelical Church; the Rotary Club; Clark Lodge No. 101, F. & A.M.; the Ancient and Accepted Scottish Rite, Valley of Dayton, and the Antioch Temple AAONMS of Dayton. He was a 1926 graduate of Ohio State University, where he earned a bachelor of arts degree in mechanical engineering. He was a member of Pi Kappa Phi fraternity and served as a lieutenant colonel with the U.S. Army during World War II.

His father founded Thompson Grinder Co. in 1905 and the firm became recognized as one of the world's largest manufacturers of machine tools in its field. Following his father's death in 1953, William was elected president and general manager.

He had one brother (deceased at the time of his death) and a sister.

Since this time I also acquired copies of the notes and correspondence of Frank Stirling of Baton Rouge, Louisiana. There were

numerous letters from W. G. Baldenhofer (signed "W. G. Baldenhofer"). The majority were typed on stationery from The Thompson Grinder Company, Springfield, Ohio. Most pertained to the early silver dollars, both buying and selling selected silver dollars with Stirling.

In conclusion, it appears the Stack's 1955 *Farish Baldenhofer Collection of U.S. Coins* sale used a name created by William G. Baldenhofer, a consignor to this sale. I believe the Baldenhofer-consigned coins were owned by Baldenhofer and were not partially owned by Richard C. Farish, Baldenhofer's business partner. How or why Baldenhofer came up with this name for the sale will likely remain a mystery.

Baldenhofer was a very successful businessman and had the means to form collections of both coins and antiques. He sold his extensive collection of silver dollars to Alfred and Jacque Ostheimer via M.H. Bolender in December 1959. At a minimum, Baldenhofer also collected high-quality Liberty Walking half dollars and \$10.00 gold eagles.

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Book Review

Comitia Americana and Related Medals: Underappreciated Monuments to Our Heritage, by John W. Adams and Anne E. Bentley. xv, 285 pp. Crestline, Calif.: George Frederick Kolbe, 2007. \$135 plus postage \$10 (U.S.) or \$25 (elsewhere).

The central focus of this book comprises the eleven medals voted by Congress to George Washington, John Eager Howard, Daniel Morgan, William Washington, Nathanael Greene, John Paul Jones, Henry Lee, Horatio Gates, John Stewart, Anthony Wayne, and François-Louis Teissèdre de Fleury in the American War of Independence. As well as commemorating each of these officers, the medals illustrate an allusion or scene from each of the seven actions—siege of Boston, battle of the Cowpens, battle of Eutaw Springs, naval action off Flamborough Head, battle of Paulus Hook, battle of Saratoga, and assault on Stony Point—and each one is inscribed *Comitia Americana*. To these eleven medals, the authors have added three portrait medals of Benjamin Franklin, the *Libertas Americana* medal, and the Diplomatic medal.

These medals all date to the last quarter of the eighteenth century, and most of them are of French manufacture, being the work of the Parisian medallists August Dupré, Pierre-Simon-Benjamin Duvivier and Nicolas-Marie Gatteaux. Surviving state papers and the personal documents of some of the leading participants allow the progress for the commissioning of these medals to be closely followed. Given the events which they commemorate and the diplomatic and political ramifications arising from their commission, the story of their making provides an intimate portrait of a nation in its formative years. This all contributes to a story that is as fascinating in the broader historical context as it is in the more specialized area of numismatics.

The introduction provides an overview of the subject, while the first chapter looks at the *Comitia Americana* medallic project in some detail. Forming much of the early discussion in the book, and no doubt a

catalyst for its writing, is a cased set of eleven silver medals, incorporating nine of the *Comitia Americana* series, together with the *Libertas Americana* and one of the Franklin medals, dated 1786. The importance of this set is its impeccable pedigree and provenance, having been brought over to the United States from France by Thomas Jefferson in 1790 for presentation to George Washington. As one of the principal sponsors of the *Comitia* medals, Jefferson played a leading and enthusiastic role in the commissioning of the medals during his five-year stay in Paris in the 1780s. But as we come to learn, support for the project was to diminish, following Jefferson's recall by Washington to become Secretary of State.

The shipment of the medals back to the United States by Jefferson, along with his household and other possessions, and their narrow survival from fire on board ship, makes for an absorbing read. After their presentation to George Washington, the good fortune allowing the medals to escape disaster continued to hang on the slenderest of threads: following Washington's death and the distribution of his estate, they managed to survive being pawned not once but twice. The trail continues until, finally, they entered the safe haven of the Massachusetts Historical Society in 1874.

Anne Bentley, the MHS's present curator and responsible for its numismatic collection since 1984, and co-author of this book, has published on several aspects of eighteenth-century numismatics, including papers on the Massachusetts Pine Tree copper penny and the Columbia-Washington medal. Her collaborator, John W. Adams, an investment banker by trade, is well known for his work in eighteenth-century numismatics, and among his more recently published books are those on the Indian Peace medals of King George III, and the medals of John Law and the Mississippi System.

The authors examine Jefferson's role in the acquisition of the medals in some detail, from which one learns of the truly ambitious scale of the *Comitia Americana* project, with plans to distribute some 215 sets of medals within the United States and a further 110 sets in Europe. Each set was to be housed in a bespoke wooden fitted case, for presentation to reigning European sovereigns, universities, and other institutions and individuals. Jefferson's recall to America from Paris marked a fading of his interest and the window of opportunity for getting the medals

produced before his departure—and by what were widely considered to be the finest medallists of the day—was fast diminishing. Reflecting on the episode thirty years later, Jefferson sought to place responsibility for its completion in other hands. This is questioned by Adams and Bentley, who conclude, frankly, that he was “wholly responsible for the aborting of a well-conceived and fully funded project.”

Despite the ambitious scale and funding for the project, very few sets survive as original strikings—none of which are complete—and they, along with the other later sets or groupings are examined in Chapter 2. One of these sets is in the Kunsthistorisches Museum in Vienna and its constituent medals had been acquired, apparently, at different times, or so the disparate museum acquisition numbers suggest. However, faced with an unerring consistency in the quality, strike, and patina of these medals, Adams and Bentley question the random means by which they are supposed to have entered the Vienna cabinet. They deftly elucidate the likely background to the acquisition of these medals, having first looked at and dismissed other possible routes. This masterful piece of deduction forms a blueprint for the way other conclusions have been reached elsewhere in the book, especially where manuscript evidence is either absent or not wholly reliable.

The following eleven chapters deal with each of the *Comitia Americana* medals in turn, first providing a brief historical background to the particular military engagement and the vote by Congress for the award of a medal, and then looking at questions of metrology, provenance, and numbers. It begins with the most celebrated recipient, George Washington and his “Washington before Boston” medal by Duvivier. By good fortune, the gold medal survives and we are treated to a sumptuous color-plate reproduction of this treasure, which is in Boston Public Library, as indeed we are to the story relating to its near-loss at the hands of a bank robber.

Few of the other *Comitia Americana* medals survive in gold and, indeed, very few original strikings even in bronze or silver were made, but dies for many of the medals were latterly copied and re-used. Most helpfully, a chronology and the die progression and usage for each of these issues is provided, with particular regard to later strikings, and the discussion also includes the question of casts and electroypes. Although illustrations include a number of *Comitia Americana* medals

from the Kunsthistorisches Museum's set in Vienna and from other collections, it might have been useful, for comparative purposes, to have had an illustration of each and every one of those in the Massachusetts Historical Society, showing both obverse and reverse, alongside the relevant chapter. Tantalizingly, we are treated only to a mid-distant illustration of this set in its wooden case, showing just one side of each of the eleven medals.

Following on from the chapters dealing with the individual *Comitia Americana* medals are those covering the three Franklin medals, the *Libertas Americana*, and the Diplomatic medal. Much discussion is given over to the perplexing "Franklin of Philadelphia" medal dated 1777, with its three-quarter facing image of the polymath. Unsigned and offering no clear clue as to whom it can be attributed and where and why it might have been made, this medal is a real enigma. Having examined all the issues relating to identification and precisely why this "secret medal" was made, the authors conclude by saying that "if those who produced it did not want their efforts known, it is not likely that we will pick up their trail more than two hundred years later." This medal is somewhat out on a limb, but bringing it center stage allows debate from a larger audience. And with the gauntlet having been provocatively thrown down, it remains to be seen for exactly how long "Franklin of Philadelphia" can keep its secret.

The other two Franklin medals, both by Dupré and dated 1784 and 1786, also receive a thorough analysis. So too does the celebrated *Libertas Americana*, its chapter including an illustration of the rarely-seen "Explication"—the printed sheet accompanying each example of the medal that Benjamin Franklin distributed. How many of these precious documents survive is not known, but the number must be small and its inclusion in the book is a bonus. Adams and Bentley have much to say about this most iconic of medals, and such is its current status that despite being among the most common of the medals under discussion, it has become one of the more expensive. Clearly, rarity alone counts for little. The imposing Diplomatic medal constitutes the last of the chapters discussing the individual medals and the story relating to its background is told in fascinating detail. We follow, for example, the machinations of the committee convened to oversee its design, which was returned for changes on several occasions. The two concluding

chapters of the book deal with the movements and locations of the dies, and examine technological application in eighteenth-century medal making, with some useful accompanying plates, all of which is hugely helpful in understanding these processes.

The index to the book is well arranged, although confining itself largely to the main players and subject matter. Thus, some characters have been excluded such as the splendidly named banker, Mr Grand (pp. 60, 210, et al.); Francis Hopkinson, a consultant on the design of the Diplomatic medal and designer of a national flag adopted by Congress in 1777 (p. 202); and Jean-Martin Renaud, a shadowy artist, whose medallic portraits provide signed evidence of his work (p. 112). As such, someone referring to the index might well conclude from their absence that they do not constitute part of the story.

The book is a high-quality production, with much attention to detail. Its end paper provides a detailed summary relating to the paper and printing used. One of the things that we learn from this is that the lettering and text typeface is an adaptation of the Richard Austin types made for the London publisher John Bell in 1788.

This is far from the first occasion on which the *Comitia Americana* series has been the focus of study. The most celebrated work on the subject was that written and self-published in New York in 1878 by Joseph Florimond Loubat, *Medallic History of the United States of America, 1776–1876*. This monumental survey covers not only the *Comitia Americana* series, but many other medals, and includes a remarkable amount of manuscript material, much of it in the form of letters, relating to the medals. Loubat's work is unquestionably a great achievement, and its material is widely used by Adams and Bentley, who refer to it as the foundation for all subsequent writings on the subject. They also observe that Loubat's work has never received the adulation that it deserves.

However, if one were looking for why that might be the case, the appearance of this new book and the way in which it approaches the subject goes some way to providing the answer. Loubat's work is a store of great material evidence, but it is as dry as dust in the way it treats the subject. Getting to the material, although not exactly an uphill task, provides no diversionary pleasures, as might be gained from interesting illustrations, or from a line of narrative that occasionally strays off

the academic path, or otherwise engages the reader in an entertaining fashion.

Comitia Americana scores well in such matters. The book contains a great deal of statistical information and manuscript evidence, but this is balanced and indeed lightened by a narrative which is immediate in its charm, yet never irreverent to its subject matter. The read is both entertaining and informative, and there are times when you feel yourself being drawn into the unfolding political and diplomatic dramas, so strongly do they play in the origination of these medals. The illustrations are predominantly in color and of consistent quality, and many are previously unpublished. The frontispiece, showing a terra-cotta model for the reverse of Dupré's *Libertas Americana* is as enticing a taster as one could hope to be offered. All in all, this is a major contribution to an illustrious passage in United States medallic history, related with considerable passion and enthusiasm.

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Front Cover: Image of a terra-cotta medallion by J.-B. Nini, Storelli LIX. From A. Storelli, *Jean-Baptiste Nini: Sa Vie — Son Œuvre* (Tours: A. Mame et Fils, 1896), p. 109.



Revolutionizing the Numismatic Reference

Howard Spindel

Like it or not, the computer age is upon us, and there is no avoiding it as a numismatist. Auction bidding in many venues (e.g., Heritage and eBay) is performed online. Countless numismatic discussion groups and websites permeate the electronic ether.

In the face of all this progress, should numismatic references remain the staid, simple page-turners of yore? Does a computerized reference simply mean copying the text of the reference to a computer-readable CD/DVD? I say to both questions, emphatically, “No!” A properly designed computerized numismatic reference is *much* more than a book simply rendered onto a CD/DVD.

This article draws on my experience working on a computerized reference for U.S. Shield Nickels (the Shield Nickel Viewer, or SNV) to illustrate the features of a computerized numismatic reference that is designed to use the inherent advantages of the technology. That I chose to create a Shield Nickel reference reflects my collecting bent; the techniques discussed should be applicable to any numismatic reference.

There is an undeniable pleasure in holding that big reference book in your lap and thumbing through it. Although this pleasure can’t be replaced, the loss can be ameliorated by the new pleasures inherent in a reference work that takes full and appropriate advantage of available technology.

STATIC VS. DYNAMIC

A printed reference book is a static, unchanging object. Every time you peruse it, it presents exactly the same information to you in exactly the same way.

Numismatics is not a static pursuit. New research, changing marketplaces, and reinterpretation of existing data make the information of numismatics dynamic. Above all else, a computerized numismatic reference should reflect the dynamic nature of the underlying information.

The computer, with data stored in a changeable, somewhat ephemeral method, is extremely well-suited to respond rapidly to changes in a dynamic environment.

Other sections of this article point out specific ways in which a computerized reference can be dynamic. *But the underlying principle of dynamism is, I believe, the single most important advantage of any properly designed computerized reference.* Any computerized reference that fails to be dynamic has failed in its most basic mission — to replace a printed reference book in a way that offers unique advantages that the book cannot offer.

PRODUCTION COSTS

There are multiple drivers to the cost of a physical book:

- How large an audience is there? How many copies will be sold? Can the price of the book be amortized over a large audience?
- How much information is provided in the book? More information means a larger book and a higher cost.
- How many people have a finger in the pie (e.g., author, publisher, printing house, retailer)?
- How much does it cost to ship a purchased book to end user? Even at media mail rates, this is usually about \$4.

All of these costs of a printed book must be balanced in a way that makes the project economically feasible. This may be especially difficult for numismatic references; they are unlikely to appear on any national bestseller list! Furthermore, these cost drivers push printed numismatic reference books to be fairly general, so as to attract as wide an audience as possible.

In contrast, here are the cost drivers for a computerized reference:

- Purchase of a CD/DVD burner. This is a one-time cost of about \$100.
- Purchase of blank recordable media (\$0.10 to \$3.00 each, depending on the media used).
- The cost to ship a single CD/DVD in a padded mailer is about \$1.00.

A computerized reference work is an extremely efficient way for a numismatic author to self-publish. Very short runs of the reference can be

produced — copies can be produced to order, avoiding the need to maintain unsold inventory — this means that the reference can be highly specialized, without regard to what would sell in a mass market. A dedicated numismatist who wants to share his expertise and narrowly focused research is enabled to do so. Nobody else needs to be compensated. In the event that a particular computerized reference were to become very popular, then it would become feasible to have the CD/DVDs produced by a mastering company that stamps them in the thousands, further reducing production costs.

DEVELOPMENT COSTS

Most of the development costs and time for either a physical book or a computerized reference will be approximately the same. Each reference requires that the requisite material be gathered, organized, and presented as a cohesive whole.

Because a computerized reference may need custom computer programming, some additional expense and time may need to be budgeted during development. The expense and time are well worth it if it results in additional functionality in the reference. It's my opinion that this additional expense and time will typically be a small fraction of the expense and time of generating the numismatic content. By far, the largest time consumed in developing SNV was taking and editing photographs of coins.

NUMBER AND QUALITY OF PHOTOGRAPHS PRESENTED

Most numismatic references are about coins, and a book about coins without pictures of those coins would be like trying to enjoy an Ansel Adams exhibit only by reading about it. When you add photographs to a printed reference, the reference gets fatter. When you add high-quality color photographs (as opposed to black and white), the costs go way up.

In contrast, a computerized reference book full of high-resolution color photographs can fit on a single DVD. And adding additional photographs to that DVD adds nothing to the cost of burning and shipping it. The number of full-color high-resolution photos in SNV (about 2500) was inconceivable in a printed reference, but it currently fills a little more than half of a single DVD.

SIZE OF THE BOOK

As previously mentioned, cost constrains the size of a physical reference book. But if the ability to add photographs to a DVD is for all practical purposes unlimited, the ability to add additional text is even more so. A computerized reference book can contain *all* of the information that the author deems relevant. (That doesn't mean it doesn't need a good editor, though!)

UPDATING WITH NEW MATERIAL

A computerized reference must be designed from the ground up to provide a way to easily incorporate new material. The new material can be corrections to existing material, or it can be completely new content. Regardless, the properly designed computerized reference incorporates new material in a way that is invisible to the end user — it is merged seamlessly with the existing material. But if the user wants to see what's new, the computerized reference should allow him to do that as well.

It is true that updates or addenda can be distributed for a printed reference book. But unless that book undergoes a complete reprinting, the new data is not seamlessly integrated with the existing book.

USER CONTRIBUTIONS, OR MAIL PHOTOS NOT COINS

For many numismatic reference works, authors have to rely on the generosity of others to photograph holdings. The author who can own everything he or she would want to document is a very rare bird. Many collectors are understandably reluctant to commit their rare coins to the vagaries of the post office. Insurance is little compensation for an irreplaceable coin. In my own work I set down standards for photography, and collectors who owned digital cameras were able (with some training) to submit photographs to me by email.

While some collectors still wound up mailing coins to me, several collectors were able to take their own photographs and submit them. Taking and contributing photographs was fun for these collectors, and of course their contributions are recognized by name.

SEARCHING AND INTERACTIVITY

A printed reference book does not interact with its reader. The information is presented in the way that the author intended, and it is not

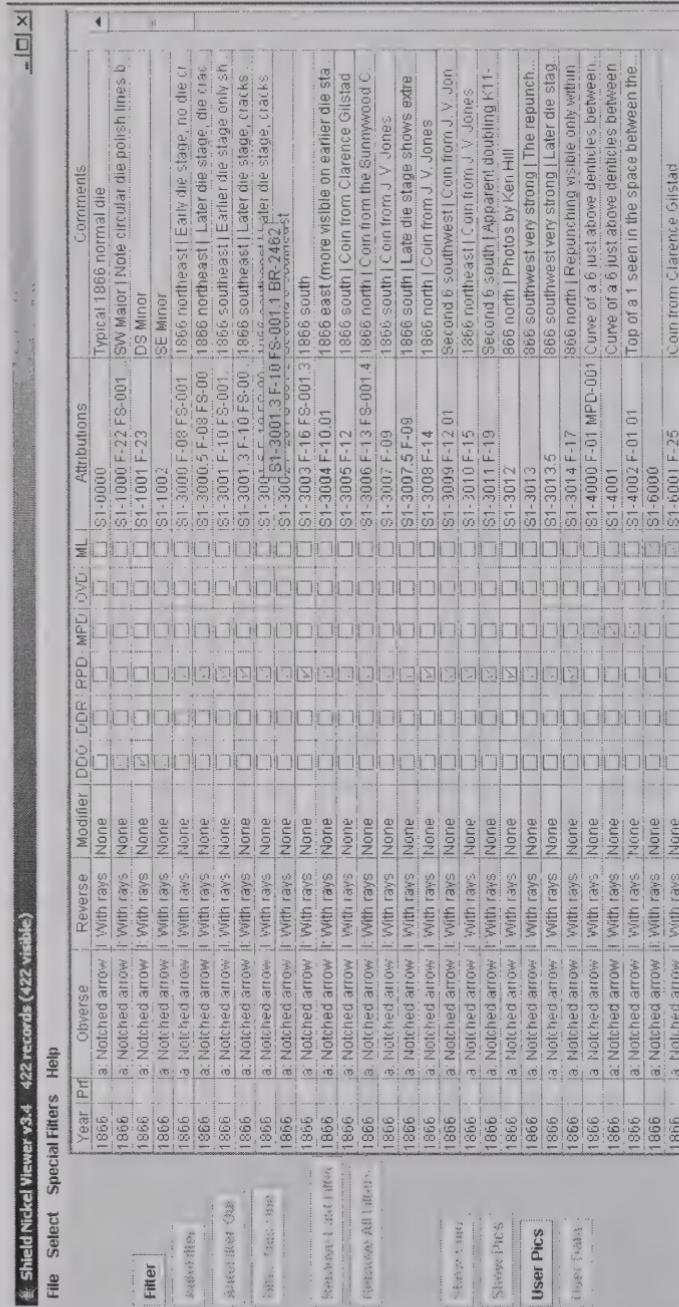


Figure 1. This is a screen-capture image of the main screen presented by SNV. The center portion is a partial (scrollable) listing of Shield Nickel varieties covered by the database. On the left side are some buttons that aid the user in searching the database.

easy to peruse information in an order other than that in which it was published.

A properly designed computerized reference is an interactive experience for the user. At a minimum, the ability to search the text of the reference for keywords is a vital requirement. But I believe that the computerized reference should do much more. It should allow the user to reorganize the presentation of the data to suit his or her needs. A simple example will make this clear.

Let's hypothesize a reference book for a particular series that focuses on varieties available in the series (e.g., doubled dies, repunched dates, repunched mintmarks, overdates). The typical printed reference book covering a particular coin series will be organized by year, and then might group within a year by the type of variety. Suppose you want to see all of the overdates available in the series. In a printed book, this would probably mean searching the entire book and putting sticky notes on those pages of interest. For a properly designed computerized reference, there would be a command "Show me all the overdates", and use of that command would eliminate all of the non-overdates from view. Searching can also help the user answer questions that a traditional reference book might not cover easily, like "How many doubled dies have been catalogued?"

Interactivity should also allow the end user to successively refine searches. Each time the end user narrows down a search according to a certain criterion, each coin in the program's database that does not fit that criterion is removed from view. The goal should be to allow the end user to narrow the search to a few candidate coins, through which he or she would then make manual comparisons to the target coins. The program should provide sets of criteria that are uniquely designed to meet the needs of the specific reference, which will be driven by the needs of the coin series that the reference covers (that is, the kinds of criteria appropriate for a Shield Nickel reference are going to be very different from a reference on ancient Greek coins, and the computerized reference should be appropriately tailored).

SCRIBBLING IN THE MARGINS

Many people like to annotate their printed reference books by writing notes in the margins, or perhaps by using the ubiquitous sticky notes.



Figure 2. This is a screen-capture image of one photograph from the SNV database. The "overlay" feature is on, showing white arrows to highlight the over-date. At top right are thumbnails of other photographs available. Gridding, scaling, and rotating are all tools that the end user can use to help in attributing varieties.

There is no reason for users of a computerized reference to give up that capability. A properly designed computerized reference allows users to attach private notes to the data. The fewer constraints placed on these private notes, the better. It is hard to predict what all of the end users will want to record, so a great deal of flexibility should be allowed. Some ideas include:

- Information about the end user's personal holdings
- Notes on coins viewed at coin shows
- Auction records

The concept of private notes can be extended to include the ability to import private photographs into the program's database. In that way, photographs of the end user's coins can be viewed side-by-side with photographs provided in the reference work.

THE DEVELOPMENT PHASE

Everybody has read a physical book, and everybody has a pretty good idea of how one is put together. Most likely, you would start by trying to list the topics of the chapters in the book, and then perhaps outline each chapter. You don't have to think too much about the user interface or the feature set of a physical book; perhaps you pick a typeface and a general style, but the user interface was established hundreds of years ago: words on paper that people read.

Developing a computerized numismatic reference takes some additional up-front thinking. As you have seen above, end users will want to use the reference in a non-linear fashion. So, you have to think more about the different ways that people will move about in the reference, and you will have to think more about the feature set your reference provides.

There is no question that the development phase of a computerized reference is more complicated than the development phase of a printed book. But it is a one-time complication. Carefully thought out, and with flexibility built in, the decisions made during development phase will carry you through all the other phases and the lifetime of the reference. Proper decisions in the development phase are what drive the advantages of the computerized reference over the printed reference, and are therefore well worth spending the extra time to develop.

WEB-BASED VERSUS LOCAL

Let's discuss two different paradigms for a computerized numismatic reference: web-based or local. Each has advantages and disadvantages.

A web-based reference stores all of its data on a web site. Users interact with the data using a browser program (e.g., Internet Explorer, Firefox). The characteristics of a web-based reference are:

- Instant accessibility after purchase.
- No additional software is loaded on the user's computer.
- Functionality of the reference is constrained to functionality easily accessible within a browser.
- Quality of the photos is constrained by the time it takes to download them (users with slow dial-up internet connections must be accommodated).
- Updates to the data are accomplished with no user interaction (the web site gets updated).
- Security requirements are strict since the web site can be compromised by "hackers".
- Requires an active internet connection to access the reference data.

A local reference stores its data on the user's computer. Users interact with the data using a custom-designed program. The characteristics of a local reference are:

- After purchase, the user must wait for a CD/DVD to arrive in the mail.
- Software is loaded on the user's computer, and must operate properly there.
- Functionality of the reference is limited only by the imagination and software capabilities of the author.
- Quality of the photos is essentially unconstrained.
- Updates to the data will require user interaction.
- Security requirements are not as strict as in the web-based model. If the program incorporates some web-based features and the web site is compromised, each individual user's local copy of the program will still operate.
- Reference data can be accessed off-line (no active internet connection required).

A local reference can still make use of web-based resources. Program and data updates can be distributed by posting them to a web site from which users can download them.

At some time in the future, when everybody has very high-speed Internet access, the trade-offs will change. Perhaps the best compromise will be to have a custom program running locally to maximize capability, while storing the actual data of the reference online.

LONG-TERM EXPERIENCE WITH SNV

SNV has been available to end users for a number of years now. As I expected, the number of copies shipped has been very small. This confirms that producing SNV as a printed reference was not feasible.

The initial goal of easy upgrades and expandability has been validated. A large number of varieties have been added to the database since the initial release of SNV (the number of varieties has about doubled). The viewing program itself has undergone a few releases for inclusion of new features as a result of user feedback and the author's own experience. Field upgrades of the viewing program have all gone smoothly. Only one user-reported software bug occurred, and it was easily fixed.

I spent a lot of time thinking about the initial design of the user interface and database in the development phase because it is difficult to change once the software package is released. They have held up very well. No one can think of everything, though, and there are a couple things I might have done differently to facilitate some features that did not occur to me initially. This does emphasize the importance of thoroughly thinking through the user interface and database design during the development phase of the product.

SOME FINAL THOUGHTS

One direction for the future that interests me is to find a way to make SNV available on handheld computers so it can be easily carried to coin shows. This will have to wait for a more powerful generation of handheld computers to meet the storage and processing needs of SNV.

I hope that with this article that I have set down a few of the basic features any computerized numismatic reference should have, and to show how computerized references can and should differ from printed references. Perhaps I have inspired you to produce a computerized reference covering your specialty?

The Legend of Storelli

John W. Adams

John J. Ford, Jr., began collecting Betts medals in a serious way in the 1960s. Later in that decade, anxious to introduce others to the specialty, Ford indoctrinated Ted Craige. An engineer and avid collector of colonial coinage, Craige became fanatically interested in medals and soon was Ford's main competitor for choice pieces. The pair went to great lengths to build their collections, sometimes collaborating at auctions and sometimes bidding strongly against each other.

The competition expanded to embrace books about medals, with each vying to find non-numismatic material that would enhance their knowledge of the subject. It was Ted Craige who located a copy of Storelli on the shelves of the American Numismatic Society, touching off a race to locate another.

Storelli's *Jean-Baptiste Nini: Sa Vie — Son Œuvre* describes the terracotta medallions crafted by Nini, the most relevant for medal collectors being five different busts of Benjamin Franklin. Ford and Craige thought that the photographic illustrations in the book would provide an edge in acquiring original Nini medallions from the clutter of copies and re-strikes that exist.

The race to locate a Storelli was won by Craige, whose copy was obtained by this writer in 1982 from the Craige estate. Ford did not suffer in silence but, as time went by, dropped regular hints regarding where the Storelli in all fairness belonged. In June 1990, this writer visited Ford in Phoenix and, in a moment of perhaps misguided generosity, gave him the coveted volume as a combined birthday gift and "thank you" for a weekend of warm hospitality. The recipient accepted the gift but, typical of his occasional "paranoia", suggested that it was so generous as to have been prompted by a guilty conscience. This writer somehow refrained from doing injury to the new owner and later re-acquired the

Storelli as lot 882 in Part I of the Ford Library Sale (June 1, 2004). George Kolbe's description of the lot was as follows:

Storelli, A. Jean-Baptiste Nini. *Sa Vie — Son Oeuvre*. Tours: Imprimerie A Mame et Fils, 1896. 177, (1) pages, printed throughout in red and black, title incorporating a fine illustration of a Benjamin Franklin medal, halftone text figure, 108 detailed descriptions, 72 very fine photographically-printed illustrations of medals in the catalogue, five depicting Benjamin Franklin, pencil annotations, typescript index on two leaves tipped in at the end. Quarto: 28.5 x 19.5cm. Reddish-brown cloth, gilt, original printed pictorial card covers bound in, binding extremities a trifle worn. Fine.

No. 44 of only 200 copies printed. Not in Modesti. American Numismatic Society Dictionary Catalogue page 4586 [copy #26, ex libris Wayte Raymond]. Forrer page 276. A classic work. Rarely offered. The pencil markings appear to record an extensive collection, and the several annotations mainly record 1920's sale appearances and unlisted varieties. Loosely laid in are several pages of interesting notes handwritten by John W. Adams.¹

Kolbe estimated the lot at \$1000. Due no doubt to the legend generated by Craige and Ford, the book fetched \$1955.

By a fateful coincidence, on the weekend that Ford received his Storelli, Kolbe auctioned various correspondence and manuscripts belonging to Adams. Intense competition for the material between Harry Bass and Armand Champa resulted in stratospheric prices. Ford learned of the auction results that same day and because he had sold Adams the material, he now accused Adams of taking advantage of him. When Adams pointed out that a) he had not known the auction results when he presented the gift and b) that Ford had, after selling him the correspondence bragged about "stiffing" him with "all that junk," Ford became contrite, a condition, be it said, in which he rarely found himself. Though suspicious by nature, Ford was also capable of being a warm and generous friend. This writer was the beneficiary of such

¹ Kolbe's description misses one important attribute: the pages of the volume are neatly glued to stubs, with the stubs forming the spine. At some point, the pages were snipped from the binding before being re-united at a later date. One can only guess at the reason for the dismemberment but the images are lovely and the book was owned by a devout aficionado of Nini. Perhaps the images were part of a grand exhibit, the pages serving to describe the actual terra cottas placed above or below them. And quite an exhibit that would have been!

friendship for several decades, with Ford's good deeds overwhelming his occasional peccadilloes.

Storelli has remained on the "most wanted list" here in this country and, thanks to the Internet, also abroad. No copy has appeared at auction, other than the Craige-Adams-Ford example, and none is known to have been sold by private treaty. Then, in August of this year, a French dealer offered the following (translation by the writer):

Jean-Baptiste Nini by A Storelli

In quarto, half Havana Morocco with corners covered, spine with raised bands, arms of the princes de Broglie surmounted by a crown at foot, golden head (Thierry, Sr. de Petit-Simier), medallions, 177 pages. One of 200, number four. Rare. Engraved heraldic ex libris. Fine example of the arms of Amédée de Broglie and of his wife Béatrix de Fancigny-Lucinge, Library of the Château de la Côte à La Morlay (Oise). The author has also published "Notice historique et chronologique sur les châteaux du Blaisois" in 1883. The sculptor Jean-Baptiste Nini, of Italian origin, worked at the Château de Chaumont-sur-Loire, owned by Jacques Le Ray, grand master of the waters and forests at Blois, later steward of the Royal Hospital for Disabled Veterans (Les Invalides). Prince Amédée de Broglie owned numerous medallions by J.-B. Nini pictured in the book.

Not only had a great rarity appeared on the market, but the copy was the very one presented by Storelli to Prince Amédée de Broglie, whose collection of medallions had been used to illustrate the work. For his part, de Broglie had lavished attention on this book, not only the sumptuous leather binding but also marbled end papers, gilt on the upper edges and, most impressive of all, the family crest stamped in gilt on the spine.

No doubt, more copies of this authoritative work will surface over time. However, what is truly remarkable is the colorful history that surrounds the two examples described above: the competition between Craige and Ford, the legend of "Storelli" as it spread amongst the cognoscenti, the gift of a Storelli with the act of mayhem that nearly resulted, and, finally, the fact that the two copies in question were originally owned by individuals who brought together the best collections of Nini terra cottas that are known to have been assembled.

"Storelli" is not a book. It is, rather, a tapestry woven of historical significance, associated personalities, and bibliophilic lust.

An Evening with Harry Forman

Leonard Augsburger and Joel Orosz

On a recent research trip to Philadelphia, in search of all things pertaining to Frank Stewart and the first United States Mint, we spent a few hours with Harry Forman, a long-time coin dealer in the Freedom City. Forman, now in his eighties, resides in a nondescript portion of northern Philadelphia, in a section of tract housing reminiscent of Levittown, New York, the forerunner of the large-scale American suburban residential construction project. Forman has lived there since the late 1950s and has been in the coin business just as long, having attended forty-nine consecutive ANA conventions from 1956 to 2004. Forman has never had a storefront, working initially out of his basement and later an office. Most of his business is conducted dealer-to-dealer, or with trusted clients.

Forman's long-time business partner is Ruth Bauer, now seventy-eight. Bauer started in the coin business with David Bullowa in 1947 and is one of the few people who have been in the business even longer than Harry. Forman himself began collecting as a child, buying Indian cents for two cents, or two-cent pieces for a nickel. Forman had asthma and was hospitalized in 1932, fortuitously across the street from the Philadelphia dealer James G. Macallister, where Forman made purchases while young. Macallister, of course, handled several of the 1933 twenty-dollar pieces coming from Israel Switt, and Forman would have his own chance in due course.

Forman's introduction to the world of dealing coins began in 1954 when he bought a current proof set at the (third) U.S. mint in Philadelphia for \$2.10. Not long after, he sold the set at the Bullowa store for \$3.00. The ninety-cent profit fascinated him, and he quickly headed to Leary's bookstore in downtown Philadelphia — the very bookstore at which the first of three versions of John McAllister, Jr.'s famous half-dime memorandum came to light — taking home a pile of numismatic

literature to study. He thereby operationalized the celebrated advice of Aaron Feldman, whom Harry counted as a friend and colleague. Forman had been running a fruit business for his father, who had taken ill around 1945. The trade slowed in the winters, and Harry had some extra time to dedicate to the coin business. By the summer of 1956 he was sufficiently established to take a table at the Chicago ANA convention, where he set up in front of a blackboard displaying the changing buy and sell prices for modern proof sets. The following year the ANA came to Philadelphia and Harry took the opportunity to hire Ruth Bauer, who had just had a child. She worked out of her house, billing seven hours at two dollars an hour for the first week. Harry paid her twenty, calling the extra six dollars "a tip". In time Harry employed many other members of Ruth's family.

Harry made his mark in the uncirculated roll business, being the first dealer to do this on a large scale. The 1950s and 1960s were a boom time for the hobby, and Forman soon developed a reputation for being a source for uncirculated Morgan thousand-coin bags, which he traded to the extent of "over a thousand bags". Even the elusive Carson City cartwheels were handled in bag quantities by Forman, who recalled buying 1885-CC bags at \$1600 per, an item worth perhaps half a million dollars today. Amid the rolls and bags Harry still had the occasional interesting deal walk in the door, and one day in 1956 he purchased an ostensibly empty old-time coin cabinet which upon further inspection yielded a 1793 large cent! Forman still has the cabinet. On another occasion Forman handled a group of ten 1855-O gold dollars, all gem uncirculated, which he purchased for forty dollars each and resold for fifty. The highest graded today by PCGS is MS64, and Forman now wonders what became of his mini-hoard.

After a while Harry offered to take us out to the local delicatessen, Jack's Deli, where he is a long-time customer and well known by the proprietor. A daughter cautioned that it might be better for us to drive, but Harry insisted on taking us in his Cadillac. Forman, at the age of eighty-four, still drives to work every day. At such an age one of course has suffered a few bumps and bruises along the way. Fortunately Harry has a large car to protect him, and a single glance at the sedan immediately indicated that his Cadillac has been been doing a good job of that. We got over to Jack's, taking care to wear our seat belts, in good order. The manager recognized Harry and cheerfully told us that closing time

was in fifteen minutes, and wanted to make sure that we weren't doing "any deals", which might be drawn out for a good period of time. Harry ordered an egg salad sandwich along with Dr. Brown's soda, an eastern brand unknown to us Midwesterners.

Being a dealer in Philadelphia, there was always the question of who knew whom at the mint, and how good one's connections were. Such has been the case since the nineteenth century, and things are no different now. Harry has always been careful to steer clear of any suspicions, although he has been as connected as anyone, counting among his friends Eva Adams and Frank Gasparro. Harry was responsible for the induction of Frank Gasparro into the South Philadelphia High School Hall of Fame, campaigning for Gasparro on the premise that "he had made more money than anyone else". Forman still regularly has dinner with a number of mint engravers and has supported the mint in other ways, including the loan of a Rittenhouse-signed check and a donation to create a bronze model of "Peter", the mint eagle of legend described in 1893 in the *American Journal of Numismatics* (vol. 27, no. 4).

On one occasion Harry came across a group of error coins from the west coast which clearly could not have been manufactured by chance, "that walked out of the mint" with unsavory intentions. Harry sent the group to Eva Adams, and later noticed in the newspapers that a mint foreman had been fired. The marketing of illicit coinage on the west coast was a nice try, but not good enough to escape the attention of the Philadelphia coin dealer. Adams quietly passed along the group to a Secret Service agent, who by chance ran into Forman at a Philadelphia police chiefs meeting. The agent pulled out the same group of coins and asked Forman what he could tell him about them! Another time Forman had a shot at a bag of 1973 half dollars which somehow escaped the mint before they were regularly issued. Forman passed on the deal, and later learned that the Secret Service was at the same minute waiting outside the store where the deal would have taken place.

On the subject of the 1933 twenty-dollar gold piece, most insiders are close-lipped and secrecy is the watchword of the day. The family of Israel Switt, the source of the 1933 double eagles, still operate a store on Philadelphia's Jeweler's Row between Seventh and Eighth streets. Alison Frankel, in her book *Double Eagle*, famously described how she visited the establishment and was quickly dismissed once her business was known. Harry knew Israel Switt, and recounted that Switt once



Harry J. Forman



Don Taxay

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Figure 1. Forman ad in *The Numismatist*, January 1975 (courtesy of the American Numismatic Association).

offered Forman a 1933, or at least, that if Harry wanted one, Switt "knew where to get it". Forman called up John Ford, who advised Harry to avoid the deal as "hot", which Harry did. The Switt family are currently in litigation against the federal government, represented by Barry Berke, and Forman expects to be a witness if the case ever goes to trial.

Forman was friends with Don Taxay, and related that in fact the two had co-authored an auction catalogue (we had no idea such a thing existed; Gengerke once again comes to the rescue and gives the date as December 1974). Forman was also the driving force behind Scott's *The Comprehensive Catalogue and Encyclopedia of United States Coins*, engaging Taxay to prepare most of the text and eventually selling the book to Scott. By this time Taxay was already living in India, and on one occasion Forman flew Taxay back to the United States to work on the book. Forman also privately published, in 1972, *How You Can Make Big Profits Investing in Coins*, which he indicated sold to the extent of about fifteen thousand copies, a good success for a numismatic book.

Harry had one of the largest batches of Assay Commission medals ever put together. The group included 110 pieces from John Ford, at ten dollars apiece, ninety from Max Schwartz, and five or ten pieces from Aaron Feldman, who perhaps sold them because no book had yet been written about assay medals. Compare this group of over two hundred pieces against Dreyfuss, a benchmark sale for assay medals (Bowers and Merena, April 1986) which contained "only" 108 pieces. Forman sold the entire group for forty-five dollars each, and purchased a new 1967 Cadillac the next day.

It became clear to us that while Harry had adopted the strategy of becoming known as "just a roll dealer", his numismatic knowledge was considerably deeper than his reputation would suggest. He admitted that his books were ghost-written by Taxay, but Forman also cited advice received from the man he considered his mentor in the coin business, the late John J. Ford: "Never let the guy you are dealing with know how much you know." It also became clear to us that one of his greatest assets in the business is his sunny and charming personality. He was a student and admirer of both Ford and Eric P. Newman when they were friends, and maintained excellent relationships with both after that friendship ended. Forman is proudest, however, of the reputation he has earned over the past half-century as a dealer of high integrity.

We finally got on the subject of Frank Stewart. If anyone remembered him, it would be Harry. Stewart died in 1945, and while Forman did not know him personally, he did know Joseph Massetti, who had a great interest in Stewartiana. Massetti was a good customer of Forman's who put together a run of post-1857 proof sets. Massetti also supplied a number of Frank Stewart Electric Company calendars to Forman, who sold them one by one to various clients. The Stewart calendars in 1915 and 1916 came with prints depicting Edwin Lamasure's "Ye Olde Mint" and John Ward Dunsmore's "Inspection of the First U.S. Coins", respectively. These two images have in recent years been hung in the exhibit area of the fourth U.S. Mint on Fifth Street in downtown Philadelphia, but as of late are not on display.

Forman drove us back to his house, albeit in a rather roundabout fashion, being passed along the way by a number of other Philadelphians who apparently were in quite a hurry that evening. He lent us several items for further study, and gave us others as gifts. All in all, it was a most memorable evening with one of the most likable coin dealers in the business.

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Report on the Meetings in Milwaukee

The NBS Symposium attracted a full house, with the presentations divided between John W. Adams and Harold Welch. Adams talked about the mechanics underlying his new book co-authored with Anne E. Bentley, *Comitia Americana and Related Medals*. He described the key decisions regarding the initial survey of prospective medal holders, the thrust of the research effort, the adoption of stochastic screening for the images and finally the choice of offset over letter press printing. For many in the audience, it was their closest contact with what happens "back stage" and the economics surrounding the whole.

To say that Harold Welch is a collector of books about Conder tokens is gross understatement. Harold is a zealot. He fascinated the audience with his pursuit of a census of all relevant titles, his listing of variants, his discoveries of relationships between authors and, in short, his complete mastery of literature regarding the Conder field. There is a book in the advanced stages of preparation, the title of which runs in excess of 100 words. Library of Congress take notice!

The NBS Board Meeting marked a change at the top. Pete Smith retired as President, giving way to John W. Adams, with all other officers and directors continuing on and Len Augsburger joining the Board.

David Sundman, our Secretary-Treasurer, delivered his typically complete report. Paid memberships are 344 (virtually unchanged) and we have more than \$22,000 in the bank. He displayed a new membership card created by himself and an NBS pin, which he offered with less enthusiasm.

In contrast, great enthusiasm was expressed about plans for *The Asylum* under the aegis of our very talented editor, David Yoon. Indeed we felt so confident on this front that it was agreed to launch several initiatives at the general membership meeting.

The NBS Members Meeting was well attended by a spirited group that participated in all facets of the agenda. Pete Smith, who retired after six years at the helm, was given a warm salute for his many contributions on our behalf. After membership and financial reports by David Sundman, incoming president Adams explained three initiatives proposed by the Board. The first is the preparation of a homage to George Kolbe, our founder and, indubitably, the creator of the hobby.

of collecting numismatic literature. Scott Rubin will write and assemble a variety of material, including the favorite "George stories" of any member who is motivated to submit one.

In the same spirit of documenting our club's heritage, Joel Orosz will complete a history of our first 28 years. Again, members are invited to provide Joel with relevant stories and artifacts. We have a rich tradition that can be made richer with your support.

The third initiative, the 100 Greatest Pieces of Numismatic Literature, will be led by Len Augsburger. It is not too early to give him suggestions (leonard_augsburger@hotmail.com) but you will get a second chance to provide input when a draft of the list is published in *The Asylum*. At the very least, this project will be fun and, at best, we will wind up with a useful guide for present and future collectors.

In addition to volunteering for two important club assignments, Len and Joel gave an outstanding presentation on the evolution of the mint. We were treated to a rich array of sketches, paintings and photographs, enhanced by the speakers' insightful commentary. A measure of the listeners' appreciation was indicated by the aggressive bidding for mint-related items in the auction that followed. Record proceeds from the auction were a fitting conclusion to a 75-minute meeting that fled by all too quickly.

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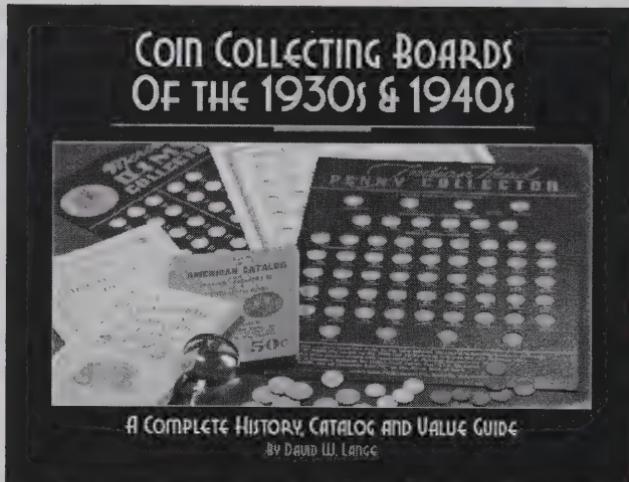
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les chutes de Castorville. Ils reviennent si contents depuis qu'ils fixèrent leur choix à t.
de Chambord à l'embouchure du Beau Rivage, M^r. Riedain pris l'autre côté; i.
determination, quoique je pense toujours que, pour choisir il faut connaître et
rapport de l'argentage. M^r. Boutin a fait son choix auprès des longues chutes
fonds noués par restes dans les bois, ce qui cache les dangers d'un établissement
piastres; enfin ils se sont établis au bord Schuyler où ils voient un petit
tout le mois d'8^{me} de sorte que je n'irai pas nécessairement faire le voyage de Niagara
tard pour entreprendre celui de Kingston & de Montréal en revenant ici pour
pour établir les correspondances nécessaires à l'effet de tirer du Canada les
chooses qui y sont bien au dessous d'apprécier de ce pays. La reddition des postes
-canton et ajouté au tiers à la valeur de nos terres. J'ai renié à M^r. Ellsworth
quatre à son ordre comme l'ayant de P. Charon. Je lui ai renié aussi la j.
vérifié la facture de nos marchandises le compte de M^r. Olive à cet égard.
la vente des marchandises n'a pas terminé que l'heure d'après notre compte a
reçue définitivement à la fin de la présente année - malgré la circonstance
l'ouvrage de mon malheureux ami et je n'apporterai ces titres à la rédaction de
chez moi où je suivrai ce travail avec tout l'assimilé minime; mais je ne puis
ad honores. Dans l'incertitude de la réponse de la comp^r je vais faire le
meilleur pour faire tout ce qu'il sera possible le traitement
des personnes, pour éviter toute difficulté entre les communautés que la Société
suppose 2/3 pour les dépenses du haut et 1/3 pour celles du bas, ou telle autre p.
alors la Direction aura un objet de comparaison dans les comptes des 2. co.
aura fait au proportion des moyens qui lui auront été confiés. Cette décision
à un seul homme, comme je vous l'ai toujours marqué, de diriger un établissement
m. de large, dans ses points les plus étendus. - les titres que l'Etat viendra de vi.
s'ouvrir dans l'autre. Si la Cⁱ suivra les mêmes formes, elle trouvera probable
ment vendre aussi les 100,000 acres individuées qu'il entreprend de les établir à
que le bénéfice est assez grand pour satisfaire. J. D. W. D. *[Signature]*



A. J. A. SYMONS
1900-1941

“...behind all the paraphernalia of bibliography, behind the bookshops, auctions, exhibitions, catalogues, collections and research which define the collector’s efforts, is the single fact of the love of books.”



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The Asylum

Vol. 25, No. 4

Consecutive Issue No. 98

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Front Cover: Part of the last page of a 1796 letter written by Simon Desjardins about Castorland, published in this issue by John W. Adams.



President's Greetings

Under the editorship of David Yoon, *The Asylum* is gathering momentum. In addition to the regular articles, we have some special projects in the works, the first of which appears here: Len Augsburger's first cut at the hundred greatest works in United States numismatics.

I am hoping that Len's project will evoke fervent member participation. Let me proffer the same hopes for two upcoming projects, our Club History and our Biography of George Kolbe. Both of these will be enriched by your contributions.

Wayne Homren is finalizing a contract to modernize our website. This will be an expensive undertaking but, after 25 years of the status quo, one which will move our public-facing portal a giant step forward. We expect to have this project completed by mid-February.

Many of you are members of Early American Coppers and will have seen, in the current issue of *Penny-Wise*, an excellent article by Bill Eckberg and Mike Packard. Bill and Mike are experts on half cents; their article was based on a proprietary manuscript lent to them by another member for just this purpose. Many of you bought unique or near-unique items at the Ford Library sales. *The Asylum* warmly invites you to write these items up or, if you doubt your expertise or don't have the time, ask us to find a Bill Eckberg to do the job. Proprietary information cries out to be shared.

John W. Adams

P. Scott Rubin is looking for members' stories about NBS co-founder George Kolbe for an up-coming article for *The Asylum*. Please send them to:

numislit@msn.com
or

P. Scott Rubin
P.O. Box 6885
Lawrenceville, NJ 08648

A Wall of Medal Records

D. Wayne Johnson

A writer's most useful resource is his own files. For years I have been remiss in filing clippings, papers, photographs, articles, pamphlets, scribbled notes, all that good stuff. I would let it pile up until I had to move it off my desk. I would place it in one of those "bankers' boxes" used for storage and mark it "TBS" — To Be Sorted. But I never got around to doing that!

To find something, as you might imagine, I had to paw through boxes of this flotsam. Never a pleasant chore, I seldom found what I was looking for (until I was looking for something else!). Then three things happened to change my wrongful ways.

I bought a book "File Don't Pile." Wow, that hit me right between the eyes. I learned some useful pointers from this revealing book.

Second was a fortuitous act of Good Wife Shirley. She brought home from a shopping trip to a new grocery store, Aldi, goods in a small box. This grocery discount store stocks their merchandise in aisles and refrigerators right in the shipping boxes. You are encouraged to take the boxes and pack your purchases in these boxes.

The box she chose was white and marked "orange juice." Six half-gallon containers were shipped in one of these open-top boxes. I noticed it was just the right size for file folders, roughly 8 x 12 and 10 inches deep. Wow again! I found I could put a couple dozen file folders, more or less, in one of these boxes. Nice fit.

So I encouraged Good Wife to bring home all her grocery purchases in these small boxes. All of a sudden, however, they changed, they now come printed in orange color. I get the point: orange juice in orange printed boxes.



By that time, however, I had learned three of these boxes would fit nicely on one of my 26-inch bookshelves. What is better, you could toss a paper or file folder right on top of an open box and it would fall in the box in front of all the other files (provided the folders leaned against the right side of the box). Then later file the single item in the proper file folder or the folder in proper place.

Third, we moved. The new house had an existing office with built-in shelving. A second room adjacent to this became the library. I had books in every room in the house before (books even spilled out into bookcases in the garage). In the new house I could easily fill up the office shelves, the library room plus a couple bookcases of nicer books in the living room — I like "living" with books.

Unfortunately there are still three pallets of books in the basement. An industrial-strength forklift would strain under the weight of those pallets of heavy book boxes.

Anyway, the orange boxes were ideal to replace metal filing cabinets. So I had disposed of nearly all those old metal filing cabinets before moving. I filled more white bankers' boxes for moving.

In the new house I have filled four bookcases with these orange boxes now called "document boxes." Three of these bookcases were the pressed-wood kind that even 26-inch shelves begin to bow under the

mass of weighty numismatic tomes.

Thankfully they don't seem to bow with the document boxes, their weight is evenly spread. I bought all new metal shelving for a wall of those heavy numismatic books in the library room.

Next I wanted to make labels for these document boxes. Stationery manufacturer Avery makes a full sheet white label (#5165) that Staples sells. The 8 1/2 x 11-inch label would more than cover one end of a document box. The labels are easily printed so I could custom print a label for every box.

I had space in my office for a special bookcase. So I had my handy man build one to accommodate four boxes across. He made this of oak and again, no bowing. It can accommodate seven rows, floor to ceiling.

I put boxes containing photographs on the bottom shelf. They were heavy. Light-weight content boxes, like one labeled "World Mints," went on the top shelf. It contains flyers and literature, obviously, from world mints. It's not very full yet and not very heavy so it goes on the top shelf.

I can still drop papers and file folders in all these boxes. My filing time is cut way down and it is so much fun that piles don't build up as high on my desk anymore. It feels good to get organized and stay organized.

I found most of my files could be divided into little groups from two to twenty file folders by putting related files together in one box.

For longer files — like correspondence (over 200 file folders) or my files on artists (250 folders) — these go in document boxes numbered from "1" up. As soon as they get too tight I can easily make a new box and space them out a little.

In all, now, I have become organized. I file not pile, thank you. I have now filled 100 document boxes and placed these in two double bookcases and two single. Now just about every shelf is filled with open top document boxes.

I have a box for each subject, or each organization, or each magazine I subscribe to. A half dozen contain family genealogical records, household and auto records. But more than eighty boxes are concerned with medal or numismatic topics I often write about.

One is marked "Circle of Friends of the Medallion." Another is for Tiffany and Gorham medals. Two boxes for the Philadelphia Mint, and three boxes for Medallie Art Co. I have information on Live American Artists in three boxes (soon to be four) and two for Dead Medallie

Artists of coins and medals. When one gets too full, I make another with a similar label. Easy to do.

One box is labeled "Carnegie Hero Fund Medal." This contains a variety of material: file folders of correspondence I had with the Carnegie Hero Fund Foundation officers and the suggestions I gave them for creating their Centennial Medal.

The wife and I attended their 2004 Centennial Banquet. We were given all kinds of mementoes. I found I could put all these items in this one document box as well.

So that box contains their newsletters, two sample medals, two Centennial Medals, two centennial books, a tape, and, oh yes, drafts of my article on this medal that ran in the October 2006 issue of *The Numismatist*. All in one box.

I still have some TBS boxes (two of the most difficult to file). So the sorting beat goes on; but no more filing drawers to pull out, and paw through file folders. I can see what's in a box even from across the room. I don't have to recall what file is in what filing cabinet.

Also I can dip in a well-marked box on a shelf to pull out a file, or, take the entire box to my desk. Returning file folder to box or box to shelf is a breeze.

To return a single folder I don't even have to get up. I can roll around in my office chair, I can reach (all but the top two shelves), toss the file folder in the proper document box. It falls down in front of the other folders. No more filing cabinets. No more drawers to pull open.

As an intended benefit I have added one line for the final disposition of each individual box (when I pass on). Some stay with the family — my 3-box map collection goes to my son — some to other family members, some stay with the house, but most are destined to go to a medal museum.

I haven't decided which medal museum yet. I'll put that instruction in my will. But Good Wife — or the executor of my estate — will know exactly the intended recipient of where I want every box to go.

Also, all this organizing activity pinpoints exactly what I need to add to this vast medal document collection.

Would you believe what I am missing most is data on Franklin Mint medals? Yes, I have their catalogs and monthly magazines (filling two boxes).

But guess what is useful that I don't have? Franklin Mint original sales literature! These gave intended information before the medals were issued — their concept and plans for a medal series or single medal. Remember all those flyers you received in the mail? Oh, I wish I had saved mine!

This also highlights that medal data can be found in many forms and formats. I would like access to it all. For possible medal articles now and, for the future, to ultimately place this valuable data information in a museum. If you have any such material you wish to dispose of, let me know. I have a lot of empty orange document boxes.

For any reader who might be inspired to organize their own medal records, I have learned by experience some tips to pass along.

- Choose box titles that are "umbrella terms" to include related files or records no more than six inches thick per box.
- Analyze your incoming publications; local coin club notices may be kept with regional club publications until the box grows too full, separate with file folders.
- Keep related material together. Put "work papers" and notes with latest drafts until the volume grows sufficient to add another box.
- Tip for bringing together "related material:" I have one box labeled "Research Aids" that includes data on sources (libraries, archives, museums) as well as tips on "how to research" and areas of research (city directories, biographical data, death index, internet sites, and such).
- Some boxes can serve as intermediate staging in the sorting process. For example, I put all news clippings in one box for later sorting in proper subject boxes.
- Photocopy. A clipping on a medal can logically be placed in two or more files, say, artist, collector topic and subject. Copy and place in all.
- Keep family and household records and correspondence separate from numismatic records.

Best of all, I now have a Wall of Records for all my files and documents on medals, medal makers, medal series and medal illustrations. Wish I had done this reorganization years ago!

P.S. I drink a lot of orange juice!

The Story Behind the Castorland Jeton

John W. Adams

Over the years, there has been a fair amount written on the so-called Castorland Jeton. Some think it a *jeton de présence*, some consider it a commemorative medal, and still others think it was an actual circulating coin. Whichever it might be, designed by Benjamin Duvivier, it is a handsome piece that has been struck and re-struck. In addition to being a handsome piece, the Castorland jeton is part of a little-known chapter in American history that is as fascinating as it is poignant.

The framework around the story of Castorland is quite simple: in 1792, nearly a decade after the Peace of Paris, there were huge tracts of land in western New York State available at low prices; on the other side of the Atlantic, the advent of the Terror was causing large numbers of French people to consider emigration.

On August 31, 1792, Pierre Chassanis entered into a contract to purchase 630,000 acres in northwestern New York. In October of that year, he issued a prospectus describing in flowery prose the fertility of the land, the richness of its natural resources, the benevolence of its weather, its ease of access, along with other assorted half-truths and untruths about a location that the authors of the prospectus had probably never seen.¹ In one example, the spring is described as “not long” and autumn as “beautiful,” whereas the salient facts are that the winter is very long and the summer very short.

Roughly 200,000 acres was placed into “La Compagnie de New York” for which a constitution was duly signed by 41 subscribers on June 6, 1793. The group met soon thereafter, electing four commissioners to serve for a three-year term. These four appointed two American commissioners, Pierre Pharoux and Simon Desjardins, who were to prove the title, survey the land, and develop the infrastructure for the many colonists that were expected to follow.

¹ A copy of this prospectus — indeed, Streeter’s copy — sold as lot 716 in the sale of the John J. Ford Reference Library, Part I, June 1, 2004.

Pharoux and Desjardins, together with the latter's brother, Geoffrey Desjardins, sailed for America the following month. The three kept a daily journal into which they made copious entries.² What they found at "Castorland" was the antithesis of what was described in the prospectus: the land was located in a remote corner of New York State to which there were no roads or direct access by water; there was no local labor to assist in clearing the fields, deep snow covered everything for six months of the year, and the thaw, when it finally arrived, signaled the onslaught of hordes of black flies and mosquitoes. To make matters still worse, the survey accompanying the deed was inaccurate: instead of a rectangle with ample frontage on Lake Ontario at the western end, the course of the Black River, which formed the southern boundary, in actuality, meandered over the northern boundary, leaving upper Castorland cut off from the lower. Further, the state government at Albany was slow to grant title. As a crowning blow, a visit by Pharoux and Desjardins to the presumed francophile, Thomas Jefferson, failed to elicit any Federal support whatsoever.

These, then, were a few of the difficulties that the American commissioners encountered. Nonetheless, as the diaries witness, they persevered with vigor. After a brief visit before the onset of winter in 1793, the pair returned in 1794 and 1795. With such local help as could be recruited and with a few "colonists" sent over by the *Compagnie*, Pharoux and Desjardins cleared land, built cabins, and framed a mill. At the same time, they completed a survey and, with the true boundaries now apparent, commenced a lawsuit against William Constable, who sold the land to Pierre Chassanis in 1792. The seminal event of this period is the death of Pharoux, who drowned as he was rafting supplies down the river. Greatly saddened but duty-bound, Desjardins continued the effort in 1796. However, the commissioners in Paris lost patience with their American managers. First, they pressured Desjardins to return some of the money advanced for expenses (he had to sell some of his own land to fund this request) and then, in August, they sent over Rodolphe Tillier, a Swiss bureaucrat, to assume control of the entire project.

Desjardins' state of mind can only be imagined. He had toiled long hours at no pay; he had suffered great physical hardship; and he had

² The journal itself was purchased in 1862 in Paris by William Sumner Appleton. He presented it to the Massachusetts Historical Society. Dr. Franklin Hough translated the journal into English, but this translation has never been published.

lost his closest companion. Now, rather than receiving thanks, he was demoted without consultation. Fortunately, there is a letter — never before published — wherein the man vents his feelings with eloquence. The following was sent to Pierre Chassanis, the architect of Castorland and its largest investor, on August 5, 1796:

Duplicata. Fifteenth. Filed and numbered 64.

Castorland's High Fall, August 5, 1796

I have received from M. Tillier your letter and the deliberation of the Company concerning me. The present letter is addressed to you, not in your capacity of Director, but as an esteemed person in whom I do not hesitate to confide regarding my predicament. M. Riedain, your representative, has told me of his astonishment in finding that I was working for the Company without remuneration. He was told that I had 60,000 *livres* of revenue and that it was beneath my station to receive a salary. I do not know, my dear Director, who is so well informed as to my financial position, but this person is mistaken by a period of eight years, and even at that time this fortune belonged to both my brother and me. The first year of the Revolution alone took away 20,000 *livres*, money which we received in annuities and commissions from the Court; the second year we lost all our other seigneurial rights; then came the *assignats* which caused disadvantageous reimbursements and loss of funds so great that when I left we only had 20,000 *livres* left in land revenues. I have not received any of this revenue since I left, and you know that after taxes and compulsory loans there will be nothing left. The 60 shares I have purchased have not yielded any income either. All I had left to sustain myself here were funds from supplies I sold, and on which I have taken a large loss. With what was left of these funds I purchased a house in Albany. You, and M. de Chaumont, are aware that I was in charge of very lucrative grain negotiations. Minister Garat had agreed to pay in notes on London, as the exportation of currency was prohibited. I had no sooner arrived in New York than I received a further decree also prohibiting notes drawn on England, which in turn suspended payment of notes from France. My agreement was, therefore, annulled and, upon my arrival, I found I was unemployed and deprived of a commission which would have allowed me to live comfortably in New York. These agreements were the reason I had to request an honorary post, the limited extent of my services in New York not warranting a salary. However, during revolutions the ministry is subject to change; therefore I advised M. de Chaumont that this could happen, in which case, if I were to leave for Castorland, I would

need to be paid a salary. He told me: "Accept anyway and in a short while we can succeed in rectifying this." We had become friends, along with my colleague, during the crossing, as our tastes and character traits were similar in many respects. He suggested I take the lake trip, the cost of living in New York being beyond my means. We made the trip to Albany and I brought my household goods. During the trip on the lake I took charge of selecting, purchasing, and distributing the provisions. M. Pharoux then suggested I should accompany him to Philadelphia as I was more familiar with the English language, the legalities, and the bookkeeping than he, who had devoted himself entirely to the study of the arts. Being aware of my financial situation, he felt compelled to give my brother the position of secretary, a position he was well qualified for. He wrote to M. de Chaumont to this effect, but during the last two years, the only letter we have received from him is the one which M. Tillier gave me. In 1794 my friend, recognizing the necessity of having many people for such an undertaking, had my brother and me accompany him and, as we pointed out to you, we were spread over a 70-mile area. During the summer I travelled to New York to discuss the boundaries. In the autumn my friend and I thought we would die from the bloody flux. We were then abandoned by our men and the two of us were left alone.

Not wishing to die in that place we buried our money and dragged ourselves to Steuben, taking only our wallets. It took us three days to travel the 24 miles. My brother was at Long Falls, 45 miles further down, and we were as ignorant of his fate as he was of ours. He was the only one to avoid this illness. We spent the winter taking a second trip to Philadelphia to obtain funds from the hands of Mr. Coxe and to bring the paperwork up to date. You can imagine that during the summer in the wilderness we were constantly moving about or overseeing the workmen, and it was impossible to devote time to writing. Moreover, the mosquitoes plagued us and we had to be constantly surrounded by smoke. The year 1795 was also spent entirely in the service of the Company. I was unable to plan or transact any personal business. Lack of funds made it impossible for me to cultivate the land I had selected. Also, the loss of the only friend I had in this country of mercenary and egotistical people left me as sole manager and made it even less feasible for me to look after my personal business. I requested that you send a second commissioner, explaining to you that it was impossible for one man alone to oversee the work and operations taking place in various areas spread over a distance of 70 by 20 miles, especially because of the odd shape it was given by Mr. Constable, in spite of all the sound arguments presented to him both verbally and in writing. I also advised you of the

increase in price of everything in this country and I explained to you that the salaries set by you were too low. It is true, my dear Director, that I did not openly request a salary, as I felt loath to do that, and I would have been more flattered if this had been done without my having to ask.

Now my situation has become critical. Bales of linen and cambric worth 3,000 dollars, which Messrs. Olive and Seton have requested I send to New Orleans, are the only source of revenue I have left. The business in which I had invested, along with these gentlemen, did not turn out as expected and I will barely get 1,000 dollars out of it. Two of my relatives have arrived and I had to pay for their fare. I put one of them to work for the Company as I could not afford to keep him myself, although I had sent for him to assist me, as I need reliable people. It is absolutely impossible to rely on the people from the wilderness.

It has now become impossible for me to continue in the service of the Company without remuneration. Even though we are most careful, it is impossible for us to spend less than one thousand dollars per year in Albany. If I were to receive a salary of 600 dollars and my brother 400 dollars, our livelihood would be assured. I was never ambitious, but one must survive and especially try to stay out of debt.

I am very happy with the Company's choice in M. Tillier. He has made generous offers to me, but I told him that I could not accept anything which could be detrimental to him.

I beg you to reply to me in duplicate and triplicate as soon as you can concerning this matter. Send my letters to the address of citizen Hyacinthe de Longuemare, my friend, a merchant at Le Havre, who faithfully forwards them to me.

If I do not hear from you before the month of February, I will rent my house in Albany and leave with my family to go to Totten and Crossfield, near Lake George, where a worthy gentleman, who was also fond of my friend Pharoux, extends his hospitality to us and we, in turn, will try to be useful to him. This, my dear Director, is how matters stand; it is not a brilliant situation, but I have always known how to limit my needs. My books, and the hope of seeing our country peaceful and happy again, will keep me going.

If you, or M. de Chaumont, succeed in obtaining a salary for me from the Company I will gladly take charge of the lower Castorland, which I consider as the most suitable place for the formation of a French colony because of its attraction to Canadians. It is also a convenient spot for business because of its advantageous location on the bay, and its land is very fertile. I will again camp in a tent and wage war with the mosquitoes, and I will not rest until all the burning has been done and a space cleared around us.

During this time M. Tillier would carry on with the establishment of Castorville and take care of the tasks you have set out for him; all of which, though very useful to the upper country, cannot help the lower country because of lack of communication by water and the difficulties by land in an uninhabited region.

Let's proceed to your business. M. Riedain arrived without money and hired himself out to spend the winter with M. Boutin, who will settle between Castorville and Long Falls. If you want him to manage your property, you must send him funds this winter. Further to your letter, I have advised him to wait for the completion of the map before making a land selection. I hope it will be completed for next January. I will devote all my attention to it and will attempt to make up for the time we have lost. I intend to choose my own land in lower Castorland and I believe I can also select yours in advance. However, it would be wise not to make a final decision until we have seen all of it. Mr. Olive has taken the 4,050 acres which we sold to him from this area. The territory consists of approximately 60,000 acres. There are 30,000 acres of sub-divided land. Would it not be possible that five or six of us owners got together concerning this matter? I would be willing to take charge of the colonization, or sale, of each respective owner, and I believe that this operation would be to our mutual advantage.

Discuss this with M. de Chaumont and the people you feel would be most capable of forming and maintaining this colony and especially establishing businesses here. I have obtained specific information on this matter. I intended to go to the lake this fall and from there to Niagara and then on to Detroit. I was going to leave my brother to attend to the farming and I would have returned to Albany via Montreal. This trip would have been an education. I would have established the necessary relationships and correspondents in each area, in order to begin operating with a well-defined and predetermined goal. This would have been a very advantageous venture for the Company, or some of the partners, had they been interested. I intended to invest 500 dollars into this venture, but the suppression of my wages and the arrival of M. Tillier have upset my plan. I must stay with him to help him get started and that should take up most of the autumn.

I have learned, from M. Riedain, of your marriage to Mlle. de Chaumont. Pay my respects to her. She would find I have changed since I last had the pleasure of seeing her, as I have endured weariness, sorrow, and many discomforts in this country.

I see, from the handwriting, that Mlle. Chassanis is still your secretary. She had promised to come and see me at Castorville and, although she still has not kept her word, tell her that this has not affected my feelings towards her and I would be happy to secure a good parcel of land for her. Why did

you ask me to select only 450 acres per person? The squares consist of 450 acres, but there is no reason not to take 500. The 50-acre subdivisions have not yet been drawn, but they are shown and there is no reason why you should have to take an entire square. You can take, or leave, as many 50-acre subdivisions as you wish.

Goodbye, my dear Director. I wish you health and prosperity and request of you a prompt reply in order to dispel my doubts. Please accept my best regards.

I shall write you, as a Director, a long letter when I return from Albany. I have many things to tell you, as well as to our commissioners, and I will reply to the letters which M. Tillier brought to me.

P.S.: Albany, September 20. On August 7, Messrs. Boutin and Riedain took advantage of the trip undertaken by M. Tillier and my brother to visit the falls and Castorville. They were so impressed with the country that they made their choice as soon as they returned. M. Tillier chose land for M. de Chaumont at the mouth of Beaver River; M. Riedain chose the opposite side. I did not influence him in this decision, although I think that in order to choose a site it is necessary to be well informed and consequently to await the completion of the survey and the surveyor's report. M. Boutin chose his site near Long Falls. However, these new settlers have no money and were unable to remain in the camps where there was a risk of a delay in forming a colony, and also an advance of two or three hundred dollars was requested. They finally went to Fort Schuyler, where they will run a small store this winter. M. Tillier kept me here the whole mouth of August; therefore, not only was it impossible for me to travel to Niagara and Detroit, but it was also too late for me to make the trip to Kingston and Montreal and return here via Lake Champlain. This trip was absolutely necessary to establish the necessary contacts to obtain from Canada the men, beasts, and flour, the three commodities which are much cheaper than in this country. Going to the posts helps communication and adds a third to the value of our land. I have turned the notes which are due from Mr. Seton to M. Tillier; I passed them on to his order as agent for P. Chasanis. I also gave him the invoice for our supplies so that he may check Mr. Olive's account with regard to this. You have not received this account as the sale of the merchandise will only end next winter, after our statement of December 31. Consequently, these matters will be left outstanding until the end of the present year. Notwithstanding my situation, I will complete the work of my unfortunate friend and will spend the winter drawing up the map for the Company. Mr. Broadbent will stay at my house and I will watch over this task as carefully as is warranted.

However, I cannot continue giving my services *ad honores*. While awaiting a reply from the Company I will go to Lake George to find a friendly place to live. Should the Company grant the money I requested for me and my brother, I would ask (in order to avoid disputes between the commissioners) that the Company apply two thirds of the funds to the expenses of the upper country and one third to the lower country, or pick any other proportion it judges suitable. The Directors would then be able to compare the accounts of the two commissioners. They would be able to determine what each one accomplishes in proportion to the funds allocated. Whatever decision you reach, I still maintain that it will remain unfeasible for one man to run a colony 70 miles long by 20 miles wide at its widest points. This fall the State has sold lots at six dollars an acre. If the Company were to follow this format, it could probably get the same price and would it not be better to sell the 100,000 acres that are undivided than to attempt to develop the same with insufficient funds? It seems to me that the profits would be more than satisfactory. [signed] S. Desjardins

One wonders why Desjardins, a wealthy aristocrat, volunteered to represent the *Compagnie* in America. Perhaps he feared the Terror and, for certain, he had no idea of the rigors that lay ahead. No doubt, a more forceful personality would have fared better but, as matters turned out, the eminently practical Tillier lasted only two years. He was fired by Chassanis in 1798, following which there was a protracted lawsuit between the parties. In 1814, at the end of its stipulated life of 21 years, the *Compagnie* was liquidated for its accumulated debts.

In retrospect, Castorland was a fantasy that could not possibly have been realized. Under the best of circumstances, pioneers need to own their homesteads, whereas the *Compagnie* was staffed with any available hirelings who, in turn, were paid by fools residing three thousand miles away. Out of this farce comes a truly tragic figure: Simon Desjardins. He gave his time, his fortune, and ultimately his health to a cause that was destined to fail. The pathos to be felt in his letter to Pierre Chassanis makes a fitting counterpoint to the stately goddess depicted on the Castorland jeton: a classical goddess contrasted to a ruined man.

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Figure 1. Castorland jeton (courtesy of Rochester Numismatic Association; *ex* Benjamin Duvivier).

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The Reverend Chandler Robbins herein gives a summary of the contents of the Castorland Journal.

APPENDIX

The following is the original text of the letter from Desjardins to Chassanis; for those who read French, it offers the full force of Desjardins' eloquent plaint better than any translation can. Spelling, punctuation, and accentuation have been left as in the original.

[in upper left corner] quinzieme cotte soixante quatre

Duplicata

Castorland's high fall, 5.8.1796.

J'ai reçu par M. Tillier, mon cher Directeur, votre lettre et la deliberation de la comp.^e a mon égard. Cette lettre-ci est pour Vous, non comme Directeur, mais comme un homme estimable, au quel je ne fais point difficulté de confier ma situation. M. Riedain, votre fondé de pouvoir m'a rapporté que, sur ce qu'il avait marqué son étonnement de ce que je travaillais pour la compagnie sans retribution, on lui répondit que j'avais 60,000.^l de rente, et que j'étais audessus d'un traitement. Je ne sais, mon cher Directeur, qui a pu si bien être instruit de l'état de ma fortune: mais cette personne s'est trompée de 8 ans de date, et encore cette fortune était elle entre mon frère et moy. La première année de la révolution nous a seule enlevé 20,000.^l que nous avions en charges et pensions de la cour. La seconde nous a ôté tous nos droits seigneuriaux; la suite a amené les assignats qui nous ont occasionné des remboursemens désavantageux et dispertes de fonds &c &c en sorte que, lors de mon départ, il ne nous restait que 20,000.^l de rente enterre. De ce revenu je n'ai rien touché depuis mon absence, et vous savez que les impots et emprunts forcés n'en laissent guères. Les 60. actions, que j'ai acquises, ne me rapportent pas plus que le rente. Il ne m'est donc resté pour me soutenir ici, qu'un fond de marchandises, sur lequel j'ai beaucoup perdu, et du produit du restant, j'ai achète une maison à Albany. Vous et M. de Chaumont savez que j'étais chargé d'une négociation en grains très-lucrative. Le Ministre Garat était convenu de payer en traites sur Londres, l'exportation du numéraire étant prohibée. A peine arrivé a New York, j'y reçus le décret postérieur, qui prohibait aussi les traites sur l'Angleterre, et le bill du Parlement d'Angleterre, qui suspendait de son côté le payement des traites tirées de France. Mon marché je trouva donc annulé de fait et je me trouvai, dès mon arrivée, sans occupation, et privé d'une commission, qui m'aurait, par son produit, mis à même de vivre agréablement à New York. Ce furent ces engagemens qui me firent borner à vous demander une place d'honoraire, mes légers services à New York ne pouvant exiger un traitement. Cependant comme dans les révolutions, le ministère est sujet à changer, je previns M. de Chaumont que cela pourrait avoir lieu,

et que dans ce cas, allant à Castorland, j'aurais besoin d'un traitement. Il me dit : « acceptez toujours, et dans quelque tems nous pourrons réussir à cet égard ». Nous nous étions liés d'amitié avec mon collegue pendant la traverse nos gouts et nos caractères sympathisaient presqu'en tout. Il me proposa de faire le voyage du lac. La vie de New York étant audessus de mes-facultés, nous fimes en conséquence, tous ensemble, celui d'Albany, ou je transportai mes pénates. Dans le voyage du Lac, je me chargeai de la rédaction et de la partie des approvisionnemens et distributions. De retour M. Pharoux me proposa de l'accompagner à Philadelphie étant un peu plus avancé dans l'anglais, et plus au fait de la partie contentieuse et de la comptabilité que lui, qui s'était entierement livré aux arts: Connaissant ma situation gênée, il avait cru devoir donner la place de secretaire à mon frère, qui d'ailleurs était bien en état de la remplir. Il écrivit même à ce sujet à M. de Chaumont; mais depuis 2. ans, nous n'avons reçu de lettre de luy que celle que M. Tillier m'a apportée. En 1794, mon ami voyant la nécessité d'être plusiers pour une pareille entreprise, se fit accompagner de moi et de mon frère; et, comme nous vous le marquâmes, nous étions dispersés sur une étenduë de 70. m. de longuer. Je fis, l'été, le voyage de New York pour la discussion des limites. L'automne, je pensai, ainsi que mon ami, péru du flux de sang. Nous fumes successivement abandonnés de nos hommes, et réduits à nous deux.

Ne voulant pas mourir sur la place, nous enterrâmes notre argent, et nous nous trainâmes avec nos portefeuilles, à Stuben. Nous mêmes 3. jours à faire les 24. milles. Mon frère était aux longues chûtes, 45. m. plus bas. Nous ignorions son sort comme lui ignorait le nôtre. Il fut le seul qui échappa à cette maladie. Nous employâmes l'hiver, à un second voyage à Philadelphie pour tirer nos fonds des mains de M. Coxe et mettu au courant les écritures; car vous penser bien que l'été, dans les bois, toujours en voyage, ou après les ouvriers, il est impossible de s'occuper. J'écritures d'ailleurs les moustiques, brulots &c ne vous le permettraient pas impunément, quand vous seriez même entouré de fumée. L'année 1795 fut employée de même entierement au service de la compagnie. Je n'ai fait ni pu entreprendre aucune affaire particulière. Le défaut de fonds m'empêcha de rien faire sur les terres que je pouvais choisir; et la perte du seul ami que j'avait dans ce pays d'ames vénales égoïstes me rendant gérant, je me trouvai encore moins en état de m'occuper d'affaires particulières.

Je vous demandai l'envoi d'un second commissaire, vous faisant connaître comment il était impossible qu'un seul homme dirigeat des travaux et des opérations sur plusieurs points dans terrain qui a 70. m. d'étenduë, et 20. m. de profondeur par la singuliere configuration qu'il a plu à M. Constable

de lui donner, malgré toutes nos bonnes raisons verbales et représentations pas écrit je vous instruisais en même tems du prix énorme ou tout est monté dans ce pays, et je vous représentais que les appointemens, que vous aviez fixés, etaient trop modiques. Enfin mon cher Directeur, il est vrai que je ne sollicitais pas ouvertement des appointemens. D'une part j'avais de la répugnance à en faire la demande ; et de l'autre j'aurais été plus flatté qu'on me les eut accordés, sans que j'eusse été obligé de les demander postuler.

A présent ma situation est devenuë plus critique. Une balle de linons et batistes valant 3,000 piastres laquelle M.^{rs} Olive et Seton m'engagerant d'envoyer à la Nouvelle-Orléans, formait la reste de mes rentrées. La maison, à laquelle je m'étais confiés, ainsi que ces MM. a mal tourné, de sorte peine en tirerai-je mille piastres. Deux parens me sont arrivés, dont j'ai été obligé de payer le passage. J'en ai placé un au service de la Compagnie, n'étant pas à même de le soutenir. J'avais fait venir ci pour me seconder, ayant besoin de personnes sûres, puisqu'on ne peut absolument se fier aux gens des bois.

Il m'est actuellement impossible de continuer à rendre mes services à la Compagnie sans appointemens. Avec la plus stricte économie, nous ne pouvons dépenser moins de mille piastres à Albany, chaque année. Si j'avais 600 piastres de traitement et si mon frère avait 400 piastres notre subsistance serait assurée. Je n'ai jamais eu d'ambition ; mais enfin il faut vivre, et surtout ne point contracter de dettes.

Je suis très satisfait du choix que la Compagnie a fait de M. Tillier. Il m'a fait des offres généreuses ; mais je lui ai répondu que je ne voulais rien, qui fut à son détriment.

Je vous prie de me répondre par duplicata et triplicata le plustot possible à cet égard. Envoyez mes lettres à l'adresse du citoyen Hyacinthe de Longuemare, mon ami, négociant au Havre. Il me les fait passer très-exactement.

Si je n'ai pas de vos nouvelles avant le mois de février, je compte louer ma maison d'Albany et me retirer avec ma famille dans Totten & Crosfield, près le lac George, où un homme respectable, qui chérissait aussi mon ami Pharoux, nous offre l'hospitalité, et où nous tâcherons de lui être utile. Voilà, mon cher Directeur, ma situation ; Elle n'est pas brillante : mais j'ai toujours su borner mes besoins. Mes livres et l'espérance de revoir notre patrie heureuse et tranquille me soutiendront.

Si vous, et M. de Chaumont, parvenu à m'obtenir un traitement de la Compagnie, je me chargerai volontiers de l'établissement du bas Castorland, que je regarde comme la partie la plus convenable, tant pour y former un établissement français par la facilité d'y attirer des Canadiens, que pour

le commerce par sa situation avantageuse sur la baie et la fertilité du sol. Je recommencerai à camper sous la tente et à faire la guerre aux moustiques, qui sont redoutables et ne laissent pas de repos jusqu'à ce qu'on ait brûlé et défriché un espace autour de soi.

M. Tillier pendant ce temps ferait l'établissement de Castorville et des objets dont vous l'avez chargé, lesquels très utiles pour la partie supérieure ne peuvent l'être à l'inférieure, par le défaut de communication par eau et les difficultés de celles par terre dans un pays inhabité.

Venons actuellement à vos affaires. M. Riedain, se trouvant sans fonds à son arrivée, s'est engagé pour passer l'hiver avec M. Boutin, qui va s'établir entre Castorville et les longues chutes. Si vous lui confiez l'administration de votre propriété, il faut lui faire passer des fonds cet hiver. D'après votre lettre, je lui ai conseillé d'attendre la confection de la carte pour faire son choix. J'espère qu'elle sera finie pour janvier prochain ; j'y donnerai tous mes soins et tâcherai de suppléer autant qu'il sera en mon pouvoir à la perte que nous avons faite. Je compte fixer mon choix dans le bas Castorland et je crois pouvoir d'avance y indiquer le vôtre ; mais il est plus prudent de ne se décider qu'à près avoir tout vu. M. Olive a pris dans cette partie les 4,050. acres que nous lui avons vendus. Cette partie forme 60,000. acres environ : C'est 30,000. acres pour la partie divisée. Ne pourrions-nous pas entre 5 ou 6. propriétaires divis nous réunir pour cet objet. Dans ce cas je me chargerais volontiers de diriger les établissements ou les ventes des particuliers possesseurs de cette partie, et je crois que l'opération nous serait mutuellement avantageuse.

Parlez de cela avec M. de Chaumont et les personnes que vous croyez capables de former et de soutenir cet établissement et surtout d'y en ériger un de commerce. Je me suis occupé particulièrement des renseignements sur cette partie. Je comptais aller cet automne au lac, de là à Niagara et jusqu'au Detroit. Je devais laisser mon frère finir la campagne et je fusse revenu à Albany par Montréal. Ce voyage m'aurait instruit par moi-même. J'aurais établi les relations et correspond.^{ées} nécessaires dans chaque endroit à fin de pouvoir commencer les opérations avec un but connu et décidé. Et si la compagnie ou une partie des associés eut voulu se former à cet effet, Ils en aurait tiré de grands avantages. Je comptais employer à cet objet 500 piastres du mien ; mais la suppression de mon traitement et l'arrivée de M. Tillier ont dérangé mon plan. Je ne puis le quitter que je ne l'aie mis au fait et cela tiendra tout mon automne.

J'ai appris par M. Riedain votre mariage avec Mad.^{le} de Chaumont. Présentez lui mon hommage respectueux ; elle me trouverait un peu changé depuis le temps que j'eus le plaisir de la voir ; mais j'ai essuyé dans ce pays, bien des fatigues, des chagrins et des contrariétés.

M.^{le} Chassanis est toujours votre secretaire, à ceque j'ai vu par des copies de sa main. Elle m'avait promis de venir me voir à Castorland. Malgré qu'elle ne m'ait pas encore tenu parole, dites lui que je ne lui en suis pas moins attaché et que je m'estimerai heureux de lui procurer un bon lot.

Pourquoi n'avez-vous fait choisir que 450. acres par tête. Les carreaux sont de 450. acres; mais rien n'empêche de choisir 500. Les subdivisions de 50. acres étant non tirées, mais toutes indiquées, rien ne vous astreint à prendre un carreau entier. Vous pouvez y prendre ou y laisser autant de subdivisions de 50. acres que vous le desirez.

Adieu, mon cher Directeur, Santé et prospérité; et, je vous en prie, promte réponse pour me tirer de l'incertitude ou je suis. Soyez persuadé de tous mes sentimens

À mon retour à Albany je vous écrirai une longue lettre, comme Directeur. J'ai bien des choses a vous dire, ainsy qu'a nos commissaires. Et je repondrai aux lettres que M. Tillier m'a apportées.

P.S. Albany. 20.9. Le 7.8. M.^{rs} Boutin et Riedain profitèrent de l'occasion du voyage que firent M. Tillier & mon frère pour visiter les chûtes & Castorville. Ils revinrent si contens du païs qu'ils fixerent leur choix à leur retour. M. Tillier ayant fait le choix pour M. de Chaumont à l'embouchure du Beaver river, M. Riedain par l'autre côté; au moyen de quoi je n'ai eu rien influé sur son détermination, quoique je pense toujours que, pour choisir il faut connaître et en conséquence attendre le complément & le rapport de l'arpentage. M. Boutin a fait son choix auprès des longues chûtes; mais ces nouveaux Colons étant sans fonds n'ont pu rester dans les bois, ce qui, outre les dangers d'un établissement reculé, exigerit une avance de 2 ou 3 cent piastrs; enfin ils se sont retirés au fort Schuyler ou ils vont tenir un petit magasin cet hiver. M. Tillier m'a retenu tous les mois d'8. de sorte que je n'ai pu non seulement faire le voyage de Niagara & du Détroit, mais même qu'il était trop tard pour entreprendre celui de Kingston & de Montréal en revenant ici par le lac Champlain, voyage indispensable pour établir les correspondances nécessaires à l'effet de tirer du Canada les hommes, les bestiaux et les farines, trois choses qui y sont bien audessous du prix de ce pays. La reddition des postes facilite singulierement cette communication et ajoute un tiers à la valeur de nos terres. J'ai remis à M. Tiller les billets à écheoir de M. Seton : je les ai passés à son ordre comme l'ayent de P. Chassanis. Je lui ai remis aussi la facture de nos marchandises afin qu'il vérifie la facture de nos marchandises le compte de M. Olive à cet égard. Vous n'avez pas reçu ce compte attendu qui la vente des marchandises ne se termina que l'hiver d.^{er} après notre compte du 31.X. En conséquence cet objet restait à reglu définitivement à la fin de la présente année - malgré la circonstance asserée ou je me trouve, je terminerai l'ouvrage de mon malheureux ami

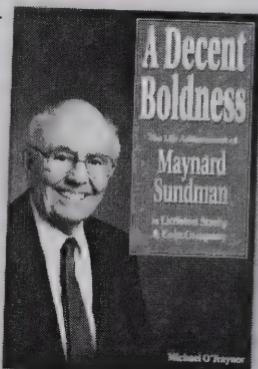
et j'employerai cet hiver à la rédaction de la carte de la C.^{ie} M. Brodhead logera chez moi et je suivrai ce travail avec tout le soin qu'il mérite ; mais je ne puis continuer plus longtems mes services ad honores. Dans l'incertitude de la réponse de la comp.^e je vais faire le voyage du lac George pour m'assurer une retraite auprès de l'amitié. Au cas ou la C.^{ie} m'accorderait le traitement que je demande pour moi & mon frère, je desirerais, pour éviter toute difficulté entre les commissaires que la Société déciderait que, sur les fonds, il y en aurait, je suppose $\frac{2}{3}$ pour les dépenses du haut et $\frac{1}{3}$ pour celles du bas, ou telle autre proportion qu'Elle jugerait la plus convenable alors la Direction aura un objet de comparaison dans les comptes des 2. commiss.^{res} Elle pourra juger de ce qui chacun aura fait en proportion des moyens qui lui auront été confiés. Telle décision que Vous premiez, il sera toujours impossible à un seul homme, comme je vous l'ai toujours marqué, de diriger un établissement, qui a par sa forme 70. m. de long sur 20. m. de large, dans ses points les plus étendus. Les terres que l'Etat vient de vendre cet automne ont été à 6. piastres l'acre l'une dans l'autre. Si la C.^{ie} suivait les memes formes, elle trouverait probablement le même prix et ne vaudrait il pas mieux vendre ainsi les 100,000 acres indivises que d'entreprendre de les établir avec des moyens ensuffisants. Il me semble que le bénéfice est assez grand pour satisfaire. S. Desjardins

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One Hundred Greatest Works of United States Numismatic Literature: A Survey

compiled by Leonard Augsburger

As discussed at the NBS general meeting at the 2007 ANA Convention in Milwaukee, we are conducting a membership survey to identify the hundred greatest works of United States numismatic literature. Our goal is to form a collective appraisal of the most important United States literature and to suggest a new collecting framework for experienced and novice bibliophiles alike.

As a first step, the NBS Board has identified a candidate list of several hundred items, which is found below. We invite readers to suggest additional candidates; these will be reviewed and a ballot will be sent to the NBS membership for voting.

We purposefully leave the definition of “greatest” open to each individual member. This may be the most scholarly, most influential, most ubiquitous, or even most notorious. This is your survey and will reflect the overall opinion of the NBS membership. Results will appear in a future issue of *The Asylum*. Additionally, an offprint may be prepared illustrating the One Hundred Greatest works, along with additional commentary, and future surveys may similarly cover other numismatic arenas. Please forward comments and suggestions on this candidate list to Len Augsburger, NBS Board member, at leonard_augsburger@hotmail.com.

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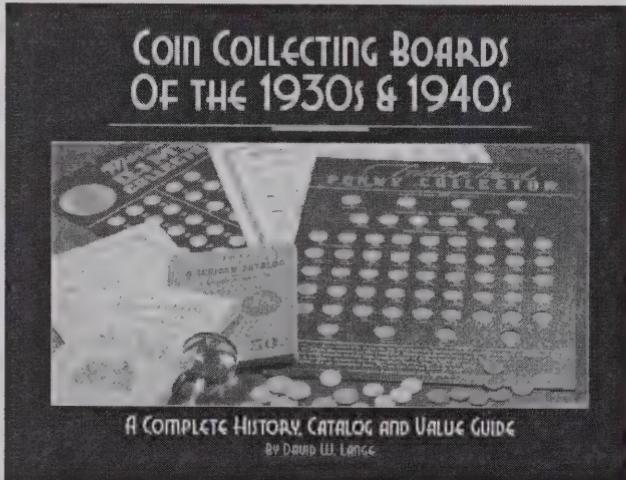
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Cumulative Index, Volumes I-XXV

William Malkmus

A brief description of the philosophy and structure of this twenty-five volume index to *The Asylum* is given here. The present index has been made more detailed and comprehensive than previous indexes, in order to make it a more valuable research tool.

Author Index

Articles (including reports, notes, and letters) are listed chronologically under the author's name, last name first. Unsigned or pseudonymous articles, as well as multiply-authored (more than two) articles are listed after "Z" as "Anonymous/Multiple." Letters, addenda, and errata related to the articles are considered extremely important (whether or not by the author) and are denoted by (L), (A), and (E), respectively.

Subject Index

The arrangement of subjects continues to be modified, and a brief description of them is offered here. As might be imagined, there is some degree of overlapping between the various subjects, so that a given article may be listed in more than one category.

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BOOK PUBLISHING: This category includes articles concerned with the production of numismatic books and other publications.

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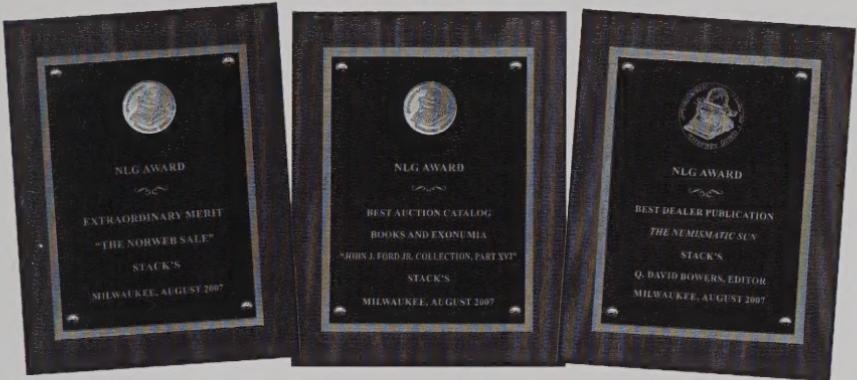
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